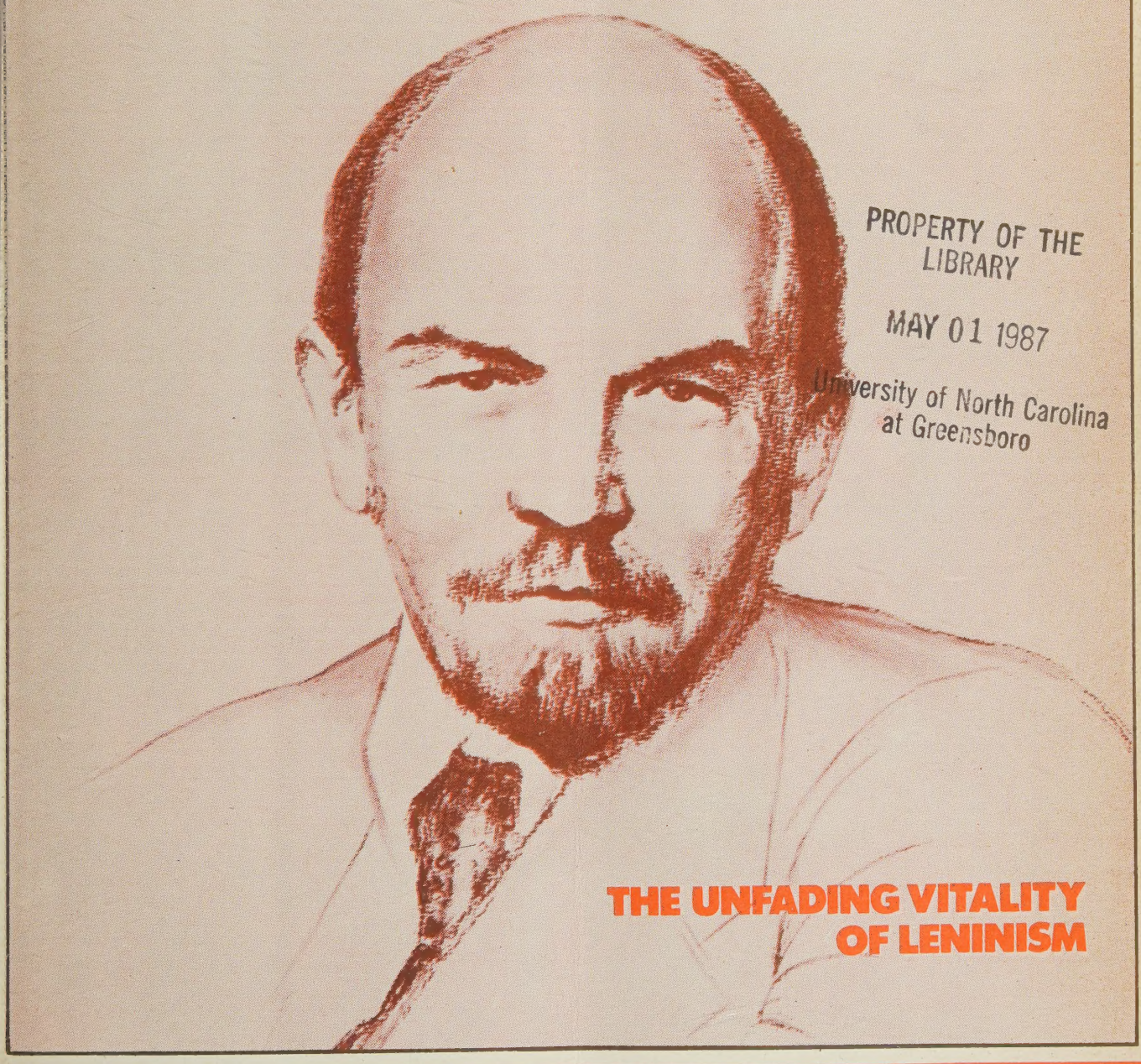
A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

No. 16 ● APRIL 27, 1987

NEW TIMES



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THE UNFADING VITALITY OF LENINISM

Reports from Czechoslovakia, the G.D.R., Afghanistan, India and Austria

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

One day, on his way home from work, Felix Dzerzhinsky, chairman of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission (Cheka), noticed several ragged, dirty waifs asleep in a large vat used for mixing asphalt. One of them, a sharp-eyed lad with a bulging forehead, caught his attention. Dzerzhinsky asked him if he wanted to go to school. Years later the name of this youngster, who was to become the famous Soviet geneticist Academician Nicolai Dubinin, was known worldwide.

At first glance the connection between the Cheka and the waifs seems paradoxical. But only at first glance, for the Cheka and its chairman stood on guard for the revolution and its future. And in the early 1920s that future was in need of protection not only from the counterrevolution.

The first world war and the civil war, the economic devastation and hunger hit hardest of all at the weakest and defenceless—the children. In those years 5.5 million juveniles— the equivalent of the population of an entire country —were orphaned. They roamed the country in search of warmth and food, lived by begging and stealing, and slept in abandoned basements, attics, and in asphalt vats.

It was imperative to help these youngsters—to feed and clothe them and give them schooling. And to warm their hearts, hardened and embittered by circumstances. Dzerzhinsky proposed setting up a commission to help these children and enrolling the Cheka personnel in this work. He himself headed the commission. Before long on the Cheka chairman's desk, alongside reports of exposed conspiracies and the elimination of counterrevolutionary bands, there appeared moving letters from children who had been rescued. Henceforth Dzerzhinsky came to be known not only as the "man of iron," but as the "all-Russia guardian of children."

Of course, the material means of the Soviet state at that time were very limited. But the best town houses and country homes were placed at the disposal of children. Trains carrying food for children's homes were priority on the railways. Eight million children under 16 years of age began getting free food, regular meals at public canteens. In effect, the Soviet government saved the lives of a whole generation at that time.

Some of the finest people dedicated themselves to educating the orphans. The Gorky Colony, headed by Anton Makarenko, became famous throughout the country. Makarenko blazed new trials in pedagogical practice: under his guidance hundreds of "problem children," yesterday's waifs and juvenile offenders, grew up to be worthy citizens. Makarenko's credo was simple—the greatest possible respect for every individual. . . .

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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16

April 27
1987
Founded 1943

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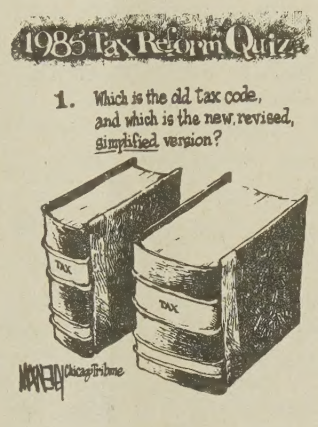

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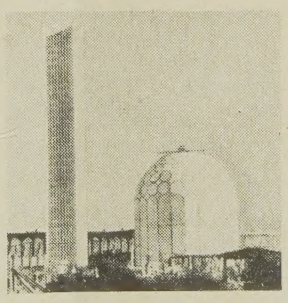

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RESTRUCTURING AND THE YOUNG

The Young Communist League (YCL) has a membership of 40 million, almost the entire younger generation of the Soviet Union. What is to be done to ensure that the YCL gains new prestige and becomes a genuine organizing force with the young! These questions are in the focus of attention at the 20th Congress of the YCL

Members of the national shock-work building team named in honour of the 20th YCL Congress, will work on one of the country's top priority construction sites.

NEW TIMES

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

Concern for peace ought to be part and parcel of everyone's life. After all, a new war, if it ever breaks out, will destroy all we have created through years of painstaking hard work. Wasn't World War II a warning to us all!

INES SCHNETTER
Berlin, G.D.R.

We are following your reconstruction with enormous attention and interest. The line of openness and further democratization you have taken enhances the prestige of socialism.

TOM and MAGGIE SMITH
Melbourne, Australia

I was shocked by a recent report about the shooting by nazis in Lvov, in September 1943, of 2,000 Italian soldiers who refused to fight on their side against the Soviet people. What came as a still worse shock to me was that this monstrous crime had been carefully concealed from us. Keeping these soldiers' terrible fate secret from their families—and from all Italians—was only possible in the conditions of the cold war against the Soviet Union. These soldiers have been deliberately relegated to oblivion.

LADISLAO DI FIDIO
Bari, Italy

A Vietnamese, I would like to share my views on the undeclared war against Nicaragua. History has already proved that the United States can never suppress the striving for independence, peace and social progress of freedom-loving peoples. By its anti-Nicaraguan policy the White House only demonstrates, once again, its complete disregard for the peoples' lawful rights.

NGUYEN VAN SINH
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

EDITORIAL

DUTY AND HOPE

Politics is the art of realizing the possible. The political past of Soviet-American relations is a continuous record of chances used and chances missed. Recently the number of those missed has grown alarmingly. Dynamics of this kind by no means accords with the responsibility imposed on our two powers by the nuclear missile age. It is their sacred duty to erect an edifice of peace in which all peoples can coexist without fear of the morrow. The Soviet Union points the way to such a nuclear-free world.

What about the United States?

Geneva and Reykjavik were important landmarks in the dramatic history of Soviet-American negotiations. As the months turn into years, no real progress is made. The only reason for this is that the U.S. administration will not discard the dogmas of power politics and military supremacy. The Irangate scandal, the "electronic espionage" rows and interdepartmental wrangling have further weakened Washington's grip on things. The sense of wasted time is becoming increasingly acute everywhere, and fears are growing, too. Is there still hope? Is there still any prospect of the deadlock over disarmament being broken?

The Soviet Union believes there is hope. The nuclear danger can be reduced. As Mikhail Gorbachev said in Prague, this conviction stems from the growing worldwide realization of the suicidal consequences of a nuclear conflict and the possibilities, opened up in Reykjavik, of reaching an agreement on a drastic reduction in, and the elimination of, the most destructive nuclear weapons.

Today the Soviet-American agenda is headed by the problem of eliminating intermediate-range missiles in Europe. In the Icelandic capital the sides reached an understanding in principle. The decisive step was taken, however, last February when the Soviet Union, mindful of international public sentiment, suggested that the Euromissile issue be taken out of the package and dealt with separately without delay. Moreover, Moscow came up with a constructive new initiative on the eve of George Shultz's visit to Moscow. In order to facilitate the reaching of an agreement, the U.S.S.R. suggested that battlefield missiles with ranges of 500-1,000 km be discussed in tandem with intermediate-range missiles, at a separate negotiating table. This removes another stumbling block for the West.

The world is calling upon the U.S., more and more insistently, to take the first truly major step towards disarmament and thus contribute to the establishment of an entirely new climate in East-West relations. This would help pave the way for new thinking in international affairs and mark a watershed between a world building up arms and a world which is beginning to discard them.

At this writing the U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz is in Moscow for negotiations on the issues that make up the Soviet-American dialogue on nuclear and space weapons. As it is showing its unfailing good will, the Soviet Union reasonably expects the United States to go its part of the way.

Common goals, common policy

Long-standing residents of Prague say that despite the capricious April weather the atmosphere in the city and throughout the country on the day of Mikhail Gorbachev's arrival was as jubilant as on Liberation Day, in May 1945.

The streets were bedecked with Czechoslovak and Soviet flags and lined with thousands of people of all ages waving tiny pennants. At the gate of the Prazsky Hrad, Mikhail Gorbachev was welcomed by Antonin Kapek, First Secretary of the Prague City CPCz Committee. The Mayor of Prague presented the guest with symbolic keys to the city and Staromestske Town Hall as a token of special respect. Young men and girls in national costume greeted Mikhail Gorbachev in the traditional Slav way—with bread and salt and national songs. All Prague residents—and this is no exaggeration—came out into the streets in a surge of enthusiasm. Then came a formal meeting in the capital's Palace of Culture. The enormous hall burst into applause when Young Pioneers presented Gustav Husak and Mikhail Gorbachev with huge bouquets of lilacs reminiscent of the unforgettable days of May 1945 when the Soviet Army brought long-awaited freedom to Czechoslovakia.

The world and Czechoslovak press pointed out in the course of the visit that it came against the background of the reconstruction now in progress in the Soviet Union, the purpose of which is to exploit the potential of socialism to the full.

"I should like to stress once again," Gustav Husak said, opening the meeting of Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship, "that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and our people ardently support the innovative course taken by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.... The decisions of the January plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, which elaborated upon and concretized the line of the 27th CPSU Congress, were a creative contribution of cardinal importance to us.... The Presidium of the CPCz Central Committee has given detailed discussion to ways of using them in our Party's work in promoting the development of our society. It outlined a large complex of measures for the further pursuance of the economic reform, greater democratization in the political, economic and other spheres, and enlisting the working people in management on a wider scale...."

As Mikhail Gorbachev ascended the platform, he was greeted with stormy applause.

"We have a common approach to both domestic and international affairs," General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee stressed in his speech. "We are sincerely happy with every success you achieve. You certainly have plenty to be proud of. Modern Czechoslovakia is seen the world over as an advanced, economically and socially developed state. Its national economy is distinguished by enviable stability and is free of the burden of foreign debt. The country has considerable industrial, scientific and technological potential and an intensive agriculture. The quality of life in your country, your public education and health systems, your child-care institutions and social maintenance arrangements match the highest international standards."

The 250 news agency, radio and TV correspondents from 40 countries present at the meeting heard out Mikhail Gorbachev's speech with great attention. The new Soviet peace bids excited special interest. The radical reduction of strategic offensive weapons remains a cardinal problem, and the Soviet Union, as the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee said, is prepared to take the most resolute steps, all the way from verifying the implementation of both sides' commitments at all stages of disarmament—including the inspection of missiles and launchers left after the reduction on proving grounds, at manufacturing plants and at training centres—right up to the complete elimination of these weapons within the next decade.

In order to facilitate the early conclusion of an agreement on medium-range missiles, Mikhail Gorbachev suggested starting discussions on a cutback in, and the subsequent elimination of, missiles with ranges of 500-1,000 km. deployed on the European continent without reference to the medium-range missile issue. The Soviet leader stressed that upon the signing of an agreement on medium-range missiles, and irrespective of the progress made in the discussion of the battlefield missile issue, the Soviet Union would, after securing the consent of the C.S.S.R. and G.D.R. governments, withdraw the missiles which had been deployed in their respective countries as a countermeasure to the deployment of Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Western Europe.

War can be triggered off not just by nuclear arms, but also by the conventional weapons and armed forces confronting each other on our continent. A considerable reduction of these weapons and forces will help remove this danger.

How are we to go about reducing them?

The Soviet Union suggests cutting back conventional weapons along with tactical missiles, strike aircraft and other tactical nuclear weapons, as most tactical nuclear missiles are "dual purpose" and can carry conventional and nuclear warheads alike.

Meeting with Prague workers.

TASS telephoto

The Warsaw Treaty and NATO member states are now having consultations in Vienna on problems related to the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons. It is not too soon for all the foreign ministers of the Helsinki Conference participating states to get together and agree on starting full-scale negotiations over a radical reduction of such weapons.

As a first step, the Warsaw Treaty member states have already called on the NATO member states to announce, on the basis of reciprocity, a moratorium on increasing military spending for a year or two and thus creating a prerequisite for a subsequent appreciable reduction in the military spending of both military-political alliances. In an interview with Czechoslovak journalists Gustav Husak stressed the special importance of the new peace initiatives put forward by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee in Prague.

"The Soviet Union," he said, "is known to have advanced numerous peace proposals relating to nuclear and other weapons. The Western countries, however, continue to raise all sorts of objections to them, at one moment over matters of control, at the next, in connection with the fact that the issues of short-range missiles and conventional arms have not yet been resolved, and so on. In his new comprehensive proposal, Mikhail Gorbachev has provided a clear-cut, constructive and unambiguous answer to these objections. There is nothing to obstruct the way to further negotiations now. All the more so as these proposals have met with a positive response in the West."

Indeed, the realities of our complex and controversial world call for new thinking, new approaches to modern international problems. The Soviet Union's peace proposals, initiatives and steps are in full accord with this imperative.

* * *

Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Czechoslovakia lasted three days. It drew millions of people into its orbit, reflected the interests and aspirations of humanity as a whole and provided answers to many problems of international cooperation. During his brief visit Mikhail Gorbachev talked with workers at the CKD-Praha industrial and economic amalgamation, called on the Mir agricultural cooperative in Slovakia, and met with the leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

While exchanging views on the key aspects of the activities of the two parties and on the development of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations, the CPSU and CPCz leaders spoke highly of the present state of our cooperation. They voiced their mutual desire to step up the efficacy of our links at all levels, make fuller use of our two countries' rich reserves to accelerate socio-economic progress for the mutual benefit. They agreed, for instance, not only to promote greater interaction between government bodies and public organizations, but also to intensify specialized and joint production and enrich contacts in other areas.

The newspaper Rude Pravo asked the Soviet guest to share his impressions of the visit before his departure.

"Briefly, my impressions couldn't be better. The Czechoslovak leaders and myself are at one in our belief that the negotiations have been fruitful and the visit a success, chiefly from the point of view of its political significance as a contribution to the further strengthening of our unity, friendship and cooperation. And of course from the point of view of the understandings reached in specific areas—the economy, ideology, science, culture, and others. We are determined to tap the reserves to hand, and use new and advanced forms of integration."

VLADIMIR TRAVNICEK

Prague

OBSERVER'S VIEW

Can we afford to wait?

There are some odd people in journalistic and political circles in the West. The Soviet Union has only to put forward a new proposal to help unravel the complexities of world politics and make some progress in strengthening security for them instantly to trot out the same old suspicions. True to form, in the wake of Mikhail Gorbachev's Prague speech, some Western papers have been explaining everything in the simplest possible terms. The Soviet leader, they aver, is merely "extremely adept at putting his partners in discussions in an embarrassing position." And a certain high-placed American official spokesman went even further, informing UPI that in his judgement the new Soviet proposals were a "bait," and the U.S. had to wait and see what the Soviets had in mind.

One wonders for how long it will be possible for them to continue to represent the policy of their major socialist partner as a search for "baits" and ways of embarrassing the West. Indeed, the contrary is true. The U.S.S.R. wants to make it easier for the West to start negotiations. In its proposals of February 28 and subsequently in Prague, the Soviet Union has shown that it is persistently and flexibly seeking solutions that will make it possible to move from words to action in the historic process of delivering Europe from the nuclear nightmare. Nor is the call to wait as innocuous as it might seem. With the passage of time, those who are reluctant to see any positive results are elaborating new and highly ingenious ways of preventing them materializing. Take, for example, the dangerous idea of "dismantling" one stage of the Pershing 2 missile. It seems to have met with condemnation not only from the general public but also from a number of West European governments. Hence a further ploy: taking account of the opposition the idea has provoked, the Pentagon apparently intends to dismantle the Pershings not on their present site of deployment, but at home, in the U.S., prior to their delivery to Western Europe.

And, indeed, even the idea of the "zero option" is constantly under attack. Today, many countries have come out actively in its favour, among them five members of the European Community. The Socialist International has unhesitatingly approved it. It is even reported that Chancellor Kohl has finally given it his support. But the U.S. ambassador to the F.R.G., Richard Burt, is delivering homilies in Bonn, issuing warnings against any backing for the new Soviet proposals and raising the spectre of Europe being made a "hostage to the U.S.S.R.'s superiority in conventional arms." The thesis is not a new one. Once again, one asks, for how long can it be possible to ignore repeated and persistent reminders of the proposals put forward by the Warsaw Treaty to begin negotiations without delay on reducing conventional arms and armed forces from the Atlantic to the Urals.

I give you CDU/CSU deputy Willy Wimmer. Again and again he has asked for any decision on medium-range missiles to be made directly dependent on a "reduction in the Soviet Union's conventional arms." But while demanding a reduction from our side, the U.S. is not standing still. As the magazine Der Spiegel reported, Washington has decided—without any consultations, incidentally, with its West German ally—to deploy in the F.R.G. 79 additional F-16 fighter-bombers with a range of 3,800 km. and capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

LEV BEZYMENSKY

THE UNFADING VITALITY OF LENINISM

GEORGI SMIRNOV, corresponding member, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

Speaking and writing about Lenin is a great responsibility. What is one to single out in each particular case? How is one to make what he is going to say interesting, to project an adequate image of the great leader? It is common knowledge that Lenin is the most widely published and the most widely read author and that heated debates and discussions on his works are conducted to this day. Our ideological opponents seek to belittle the importance of his ideas and his teachings.

Lenin's works have been published in 138 languages in 65 countries, in a total edition of about 800 million copies, with Simenon, the Bible and Shakespeare being the second, third, and fourth best sellers, respectively. This speaks for itself. Wherein lies the secret of this enormous interest in Lenin? Why is it that his opinions, ideas and works have lost none of their topical importance to this day?

He was a great scientist, of course, and a great revolutionary—devoted, courageous, fearless and almost peerless.

Still it seems to me that the everlasting value of Lenin's heritage stems from the fact that he profoundly understood socialism and identified himself with its ideas as completely as a great artist does with his work. To Lenin, socialism meant not only an objective inevitability, a way out of the blind alley the country had found itself in, the creative work of the masses, the key to the problems involved in attaining social justice, and an effective organization of social relations. Lenin perceived socialism as an organic part of his own being, as a natural, necessary and ultimate way of human life, and could therefore clearly envision it, point out the road to it, and find the keys to the complicated problems arising in the course of building it. We admire and marvel at the profound, humane, bold, revolutionary, realistic and forward-looking way he thought about the present and the future. This is why we constantly draw on his ideas in the process of reconstruction.

●

The changes taking place in our country are profound and revolutionary in character, and they embrace all spheres of life. Not everyone, of course, is capable of correctly assessing and grasping their significance. It is not just a question of ideological opponents who see these changes as "symptoms of departure from socialism." Even some of our friends abroad, indeed, some Soviet people, are wondering if these changes really accord with Lenin's ideas.

In fact, the further we advance along the road of radical reforms, the nearer we come to our goal of putting Lenin's doctrine into practice. The theory underlying the concept of social and economic acceleration is nothing but the ideas of Lenin restored to their purity and strength. This is the aim of the efforts to overcome the braking mechanism that has emerged over the years, to purge our life of accretions alien to Leninism. This is the aim of the frank and open attitude adopted by the 27th Congress of the Party and the January 1987 plenum of the Party's Central Committee.

●

Revolutionary eras, characterized as they are by sharp conflicts, tax all the creative forces of society and bring to the fore people who make outstanding contributions to the material and spiritual development of humanity. Their activity is prodigiously fruitful both for their contemporaries and for succeeding generations.

The ideas and deeds of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party which he led, the revolutionary transformations brought about by the October Revolution of 1917 became a profound expression of the historic mission of the Russian proletariat, the activity of Russia's outstanding sons and daughters who dreamed of turning their country into an enlightened state of elevated culture and sought to achieve the ideals of justice, humanism, peace and progress. Lenin as a personality embodied the best features of Russia's working class—a sense of purpose, staunchness, selflessness, moral probity, dedication to the revolutionary cause and honour. He had assimilated the best of the world's progressive thought.

In his writings Lenin mentions thousands of scientists, authors and public personalities of different countries, whose work he had studied profoundly and critically, adopting everything of value, everything that could serve the proletariat in the struggle for the revolutionary renewal of the world. It is a notable fact that Lenin's vocabulary, which numbers over 37,600 words, is unmatched by any of the published lexicons used by other writers, thinkers and political leaders. Not surprisingly, the first Soviet government formed by Lenin in October 1917 was described abroad as the most cultured and best educated of all governments existing at the time.

Important features of Lenin's theoretical and practical activity were its innovatory and revolutionary quality, consistency and unbending will. These qualities were highlighted at crucial points in history: in the struggle to establish and preserve the Party of the new type, in the dramatic days of the October Revolution of 1917, in the debates over the Brest Peace issue, and in 1921 when the New Economic Policy was launched. At the present juncture, when Soviet society has embarked on revolutionary renewal and radical restructuring, the CPSU draws inspiration from Lenin's political courage and pioneering spirit.

●

The main cause of the difficulties that arose in the seventies and early eighties was that for subjective reasons we could not realize in time the need for change, the danger of mounting crisis phenomena in society, and work out a clear strategy to overcome them. No Party leader rejected the bedrock principles of the Leninist teaching on socialism, but there have been many deviations from it. The result has been stagnation in the economy and social relations.

Contrary to the innovative, revolutionary spirit of Leninism, conservative sentiments prevailed in policy making and in the day-to-day running of affairs. Dogmatic and simplistic notions of socialism were cultivated for many years. Everything that did not fit into habitual schemes was rejected. Our achievements were exaggerated and problems that had long come to a head were not being addressed.

The profound examination of the situation begun at the April 1985 plenum of the Party's Central Committee was carried out in accordance with Lenin's traditions. "If we are not afraid to speak the sad and bitter truth straight out," Lenin wrote, "we shall learn, we shall unfailingly and certainly learn to overcome all our difficulties."

The "sad and bitter truth" had to be stated, but not as an act of self-

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Georgi Smirnov is director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the CPSU Central Committee.

flagellation. A critical assessment of our past record was necessary in order to distinguish achievements from errors and map out a strategy for rectifying the errors and clearing the road ahead.

Practice has amply borne out Lenin's conclusion that building socialism is a complex and arduous process accompanied by "occasional zigzags" and "gigantic turns," difficult transitions. But these difficulties are outweighed many times over by the spectacular achievements of socialism in meeting the interests of the people, as our Party's Programme aptly says. In order not to get lost amid all these turns, one must have a clear general perspective of the movement and take into account the specific features of each transition. Among the most important contributions of Leninism now being upheld by the CPSU is undoubtedly the demand for scientific objectivity, a sober assessment of every stage in socialist construction, a profound analysis not only of progressive trends of social development but also of its contradictions and difficulties, the uncompromising exposure of and efforts to overcome negative processes, and a resolute break with outdated stereotypes of political leadership and thinking.

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Lenin's conception of socialism as the creativity of the masses is particularly important at this crucial stage in history. His philosophy of the activity of the working people provides the core of the present-day conception of acceleration. This conception is central to the programme of restructuring elaborated by the CPSU.

Restructuring implies a resolute struggle against stagnation, reliance on the creative potential of the people as a whole, the development of socialist democracy and self-government by the people in every way. It implies a higher role of intensive economic growth factors, the combination of scientific and technological achievements with the planned economy, the use of the entire potential of socialism and its inherent forms and methods of stimulating progress, particularly in the economic field.

As of the beginning of this year all industrial enterprises and associations adopted methods of economic management which had been tested in advance in pilot schemes. This means that excessive centralization is gradually being abandoned and enterprises and local government bodies are being given more scope. A number of industries are already operating on a totally self-financing, cost-accounting basis.

It was Lenin who explained the essence and significance of cost accounting, but these ideas have unfortunately never been fully applied at any period in Soviet history. True, they were never denied on the theoretical level. Though elements of cost accounting were applied in practice, their role was obviously underestimated. It is only now that the principles of cost accounting are being introduced on a full scale.

Lenin considered material incentives to be one of the foundations of cost accounting. His critique of wage levelling as a phenomenon alien to socialism is relevant today. In past decades the policy of material and moral incentives was inconsistent and often without a scientific basis. The principle of "share and share alike" was widely practised. The payment of unearned money, the handing out of unearned bonuses not only slowed down the growth of labour productivity, the improvement of efficiency, but caused grave moral damage and encouraged idlers and slackers. The "levelling" of incomes proved to be a wrong policy. Its practical result was to hold down pay for the skilled labour of engineers, scientists and teachers. The status of these professions was falling, as was also the role of specialists in the work collectives. This proved a disincentive for people to improve their professional skills and assume responsibilities.

Concrete steps have now been taken to overcome levelling in the field of distribution. This end will be served, among other things, by the gradual transfer of the whole economy to complete cost accounting and self-financing, by improvements in the wage mechanism, by restoring the true role of bonuses as a labour incentive, and by raising salaries and differentiating pay for professionals.

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Lenin referred to socialism as "a system of civilized cooperators." The January plenum of the CPSU Central Committee called for a drastic reappraisal of our attitude to cooperative property. For a long time it was seen as something secondary and outdated, and was impinged upon and limited in practice. The plenum also put an end to incorrect views on privately used subsidiary plots of land and individual labour, which were previously thought to be alien to socialism.

Vigorous measures have been taken to redress the situation in this area. A great measure of autonomy has been given to collective farms. Conditions are being created to make possible cooperation in the public services, catering, the production of daily necessities, and in local crafts. The law on individual labour, due to come into force on May 1, 1987, will give scope for the private initiative of citizens and the development of socialist enterprise.

We already have some positive results to report in this area. What puts us on our guard, however, is that the advocates of administrative, bureaucratic methods of management are resisting forms which are at odds with their ingrained attitudes. The plenum issued a stern warning to those administrators who are placing obstacles in the way of cooperation. It is important to see to it that the Party's bold decisions in this sphere should not be choked by red tape and degenerate into a token move with minimal practical effect.

In dealing with the problems of cooperation and individual labour, the CPSU has creatively applied Lenin's idea that small commodity production can and must be used in the building of socialism. It would be simplistic, however, to see the steps being taken today as a mere reversion to the New Economic Policy. The situation in the country has qualitatively changed, as have the scope, complexity and socio-economic content of the tasks being tackled.

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So, economic restructuring means total cost accounting, self-financing, state quality inspection, team and collective contracting systems, no discrimination against cooperative property, and the encouragement of individual labour. It becomes increasingly apparent, however, that reform cannot and need not be confined to the economy. It should be extended to all spheres of public life. Reform means harmony of word and action, and overcoming the unnatural situation where people had to say one thing and do another. It means greater criticism and self-criticism and openness. This brings to mind Lenin's idea that a state is strong "when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously."

An indispensable condition for reform is the development and improvement of socialist democracy. We turn more and more frequently to Lenin's idea that free creators of new forms of social organization can only be people who know no power other than the power of their own association. In setting the task of involving the mass of the people in government, Lenin wrote: "Is there any way other than practice by which the people can learn to govern themselves and to avoid mistakes? Is there any way other than by proceeding immediately to genuine self-government by the people?"

The course of development of socialist democracy in our country has been complex and contradictory. Our history has seen periods when democratic principles had to be restricted. Nor should one forget the damage caused to socialist democracy by the cult of Stalin. For a number of reasons some

administrators developed a fear and mistrust of the people. And the formalization of democracy made apathy and passivity a widespread attitude among the broad masses of the people. Genuine participation in management was replaced by bogus participation.

It should not be forgotten, however, that the democratic, genuinely popular basis of Soviet power has endured, despite the formidable difficulties and trials to which the U.S.S.R has been exposed. Over the years of socialist construction the social base of the Soviets has broadened immeasurably, the population has become more politically aware, considerable opportunities have emerged for citizens to take part in managing production, and state and public affairs.

Today Lenin's idea on the extension of democratic principles in economic management is being vigorously realized. Many work collectives have been electing managers, approaching this matter with a full sense of responsibility. In Moscow, for example, such elections have been held at the Krasny Proletary industrial association and at the Institute of Electronic Engineering.

If the process of democratization is to be genuine, wide discussion of candidates and competitive selection for office must become the norm. This would bring state property closer to every worker, and put an end to a certain alienation in the labour sphere. Every worker will be involved in basic decision-making in matters of production, and the feeling of being master of the enterprise will be awakened.

Improving the system of elections to the Soviets at all levels, giving broader rights to existing public organizations and creating new ones, such as the U.S.S.R. Organization of Veterans of War and Labour, the Soviet Cultural Fund and women's councils, are called upon not only to involve workers in deciding state affairs but to raise this participation to a new level, and make it more effective. Implementing Lenin's concept of popular self-government is not a short-term political campaign. It requires a consistent and resolute struggle against red tape, conservatism, against everything that has hampered the development of socialist government by the people for many years.

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The success of revolutionary change and of any cardinal reforms in society depends on the keynote set by the Party. This Leninist idea underlies the drive launched by the January plenum of the CPSU Central Committee to restructure the entire Party work. Prompt and profound change in its forms and methods is imperative, and we must act vigorously, boldly, creatively and competently. Party bodies have much to do to get rid of verbal or administrative methods in their activities. We shall not be able to rise to the new challenges unless we break with outdated methods.

The following statement by Mikhail Gorbachev goes a long way towards explaining the vanguard role of the Party today: "A revolutionary is not someone who trots out revolutionary phrases, but someone who is able to build a perspective, to stimulate the people and the Party to prolonged and uphill struggle, noticing every step forward, using it to gain a foothold for a new and bigger step." Communists must be quick to spot everything that is positive in the experience of socialist construction, and make it part of the practice of the whole Party and the people.

Another "must" in the current reform is that every Communist and every Party organization should take an impartial and critical view of what has not been done or is being done poorly. Work performance should only be assessed in terms of the plans proclaimed by the Party and the promises made to the people.

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The acceleration of socio-economic development and change in all spheres of life in Soviet society are closely linked with the more active foreign policy of the CPSU and the Soviet government. On the international level, reform means socialism's new invitation to capitalism to peaceful competition. Such competition would benefit universal progress and world peace.

Lenin stressed that in the issues of securing peace our country attaches top priority not to declarations and statements, but to actions. To prove this the U.S.S.R. has launched an impressive initiative in proposing a nuclear-free world by the year 2000. Despite counteraction on the part of the U.S., the Soviet leadership has concentrated its efforts on realizing a disarmament programme of epochal significance. It seeks to identify and use the slightest chance in order to stem the growing threat of war while it is still possible.

The dynamism, creative character and new content of Soviet foreign policy are highlighted by the concrete Soviet initiatives.

In Reykjavik, the bold, simple and clear proposals of the Soviet side broke the political deadlock in the Soviet-American dialogue.

The Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests, which was repeatedly extended, provided an example of new thinking.

Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal of February 28, 1987, on removal of Soviet and American medium-range missiles from Europe was another instance of flexibility and realism.

A number of major Soviet initiatives aimed at promoting security in the Asian-Pacific and other regions have met with broad response worldwide.

It is significant that in rejecting the concept of an "exclusive club" or a "club of superpowers," the U.S.S.R. seeks to involve all countries—large and small, developed and developing—in negotiations as permanent and equal partners.

Soviet actions in the international arena embody the new philosophy of peace. This philosophy has its roots in the humane principles of Leninist foreign policy. Its foundation is provided by Lenin's idea of the peaceful coexistence of states, especially his idea of the primacy of the interests of social development over the interests of the proletariat in this or that country. This means that the Soviet Union's attitude to the idea of international cooperation and peace is the basic principle of our ideology. The 27th Congress of the CPSU has invested these ideas with new content by adding elements which take account of the realities of the nuclear age. The concept of comprehensive security advanced by the congress is based on the categories of new political thinking, which regards trust and peaceful coexistence as the bedrock principles of international relations.

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During the 70 years of work to transform society along collectivist lines, we have made outstanding achievements, in spite of all the difficulties and sacrifices, delusions and miscalculations. The Marxist-Leninist theory of building socialism has been vindicated on an international scale. Hundreds of millions of people have embarked on the road of building a communist civilization.

Times change, new problems and new tasks arise. The transformations initiated in this country are only the first stage of more significant and profound changes. They will enable us to put the vast potential of socialism at the service of society.

In making ambitious plans we turn, as always, to Lenin. We are not going back to Lenin, but "catching up" with him, as we seek to understand his ideas more deeply and comprehensively. Lenin's doctrine helps us to find answers to the crucial and burning issues of our time. Leninism remains an everlasting source of inspiration to us.

■

CHINA—SWEDEN

Similar views

● CHINA IS PREPARED, TOGETHER WITH SWEDEN AND PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES THE WORLD OVER, TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMON EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT EFFECTIVE DISARMAMENT AND SAFEGUARD PEACE ON EARTH, SAID PREMIER OF THE STATE COUNCIL ZHAO ZIYANG, ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

The statement was made during the recent visit to China of Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson of Sweden, in the course of which both sides outlined their positions as regards disarmament and safeguarding world peace.

Zhao Ziyang said the struggle against the arms race and the efforts to ensure real disarmament were important components of Chinese foreign policy. He noted that as a nuclear power China had never shirked responsibility for achieving disarmament. As soon as China came into possession of the nuclear weapon it declared that under no circumstances would it be the first to use this weapon, nor use or threaten to use it against non-nuclear countries or in nuclear-free zones. China, he went on, favours a total ban on, and the complete elimination of, all nuclear weapons, and believes that the reduction of nuclear weapons must go parallel with the reduction of conventional armaments.

Sweden and the People's Republic of China, Renmin ribao reported in a commentary on the Chinese-Swedish talks, had expressed their opposition to the militarization of outer space; they believe it should be used for peaceful purposes.

Speaking of Soviet-American talks on nuclear disarmament, the paper continued, Zhao Ziyang said China favoured dialogue between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. and hoped they would reach an accord helping to ease world tensions. It also favoured the Soviet Union and the United States having "substantial talks" on medium-range missiles and reaching an agreement that "would not impair the interests of other states."

At a reception in Peking Carlsson said that Sweden shared many of China's views and that the two countries' major foreign policy lines coincided in many respects. Addressing newsmen, he said that during the talks China expressed support for the initiatives advanced by the Delhi Six to ensure peace and stability in the world. He said he regretted that the U.S. had failed to join the U.S.S.R. in its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests and that the latter had to resume them after the moratorium ended. In the opinion of Sweden, he went on, a moratorium was the first step towards complete disarmament.

MIKHAIL YAKOVLEV

MONGOLIA

Grateful to Soviet servicemen

In conformity with the decision of the Soviet government and in accordance with an agreement reached with the government of the Mongolian People's Republic, the Soviet Union has started the withdrawal announced earlier of one motorized infantry division and several units of the military contingent temporarily stationed in Mongolia.

The newspaper Unen reports of the meetings and parties held in connection with their return home. Soviet servicemen were greeted warmly in the Mongolian capital. The Mongolian leaders, the papers note, have expressed their profound gratitude to them for fulfilling their internationalist duty.

EGYPT

What the poll showed

● BY DISSOLVING THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY AND HOLDING A SNAP GENERAL ELECTION IN EGYPT THE RULING NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY CAUSED CONSIDERABLE SURPRISE.

The more so that the government had a solid majority in the outgoing legislative body.

At the end of last year Egypt's electoral law was altered to enable independents to stand for parliament, and a nationwide referendum held in February on President Mubarak's decree approved an early poll under the new system. What made the Egyptian leadership take such a decision?

Most news analysts believe that in the present complex economic and political situation at home the government needed a new election to get a fresh mandate for its policy and counter criticism and demands from the opposition for a wider application of democratic principles in public life.

The open-door policy, initiated by Sadat and inherited by the present government, has had unhappy consequences. The growth of the economy, dependent on foreign capital, has slowed down. The positions of both the public sector and industrialists have weakened. The present social situation is characterized by a wider gulf between millions of people living on the verge of poverty or worse, and a handful of profiteers.

The inevitable effects of the distressing economic situation are increasing political polarization and the growth of extremism, specifically in religion. The opposition is castigating the government for its policy and demanding political reforms.

The poll showed that the Mubarak government is in firm control of the situation. The National Democratic Party won an absolute majority, 338 of the 458 seats, with the Islamic Alliance getting a mere 60.

The latest poll was held in more democratic conditions than previous ones: the opposition parties were able to campaign on a much wider

scale and state their views in the media.

In a number of areas, however, as Minister of the Interior Zaki Badr said, extremist elements attempted to frustrate the normal course of voting, provoked disorder and clashes and attacked polling stations, while some representatives of the opposition accused the authorities of making arrests among its suporters on the eve of the election.

The growth of religious sentiments in Egypt is worthy of note. For the first time the Socialist Labour Party and the Liberal Socialist Party, in conjunction with the officially banned Muslim Brotherhood, campaigned on a single ticket as the Islamic Alliance. The position of the New Wafd, which represents the old, traditional Egyptian bourgeoisie, has weakened: it lost 20 seats and will now have only 36 members of parliament.

The National Progressive Unionist Party, whose election programme called for greater political and economic independence and support for the interests of the broad masses, refused to enter a coalition with the Muslim Brotherhood. As a result, it was unable to cross the 8 per cent threshold established by the law and win seats in parliament.

The ruling party was clearly able to consolidate its position. It is not yet clear, however, how the election results will influence the internal political situation. The new parliament met on April 22, and the following day President Mubarak addressed deputies with a programme speech.

ANDREI OSTALSKY

What a nightmare! The hand of Moscow again! Cartoon by V. Arsenyev

JAPAN

A dangerous transit

● NEW FACTS PERTAINING TO A SECRET COLLUSION BETWEEN TOKYO AND WASHINGTON.

Three representatives of the Japan Communist Party have discovered a document in the U.S. Congress Library, which has caused quite a stir here. I had a talk with one of the searchers—Shoji Niihara, a member of the Presidium of the JCP Central Committee.

"We went to the U.S. in mid-January. Our purpose was to study some American government documents declassified over the period of 1975-86 in search of possible evidence of the U.S. infiltrating nuclear weapons into Japan. Our hard work was crowned with success: we found a secret message from the then U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk to the U.S. ambassador in Tokyo Edwin Reischauer. It transpired from the message—dated

February 24, 1966—that the American and Japanese governments had signed a confidential agreement in 1960 authorizing the U.S. to introduce nuclear weapons to Japan.

The exposé put the parties to the collusion out of countenance. After the message had been reported to a press conference on April 4, the Japanese Foreign Ministry refused to comment on it. It was only two days later that the Prime Minister made a statement to the effect that the government knew nothing about the secret agreement. Still later, on April 10, the U.S. State Department confirmed the authenticity of the message, but threw in an assertion, for good measure, that the phrase "confidential arrangement" was due to an "inaccuracy" in drafting it.

"This is a very serious matter," Niihara said. "Japan is assigned an important part in U.S. nuclear schemes against the U.S.S.R. in the Far East. Considering the vigorous opposition to nuclear arms by most Japanese, the United States will hardly venture to stockpile them in our country permanently. But we have satisfied ourselves that they do carry these weapons 'in transit' on board ships and planes. The document we have found makes it perfectly clear that Japanese conservatives are toeing Washington's line.

"The political situation in which the message was sent deserves special note. At the beginning of February 1966, the Soviet government offered to guarantee the non-use of nuclear weapons against countries having no such weapons on their territories. This initiative by the U.S.S.R. was favourably received by most Japanese, including Deputy Foreign Minister Takezo Shimoda. In mid-February he said that the Japanese should not shelter behind the American 'nuclear umbrella.' Such an attitude probably threw Washington into panic, all the more so as at the same time President Charles de Gaulle of France had officially announced his country's withdrawal from NATO's military organization. After two days of emergency consultations between the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, Dean Rusk sent Reischauer a message demanding that the latter got Japan to reject the Soviet offer.

"We paid special attention to the part of the message that says that if Japan assumed a non-nuclear status, the secret agreement of 1960 would be rendered invalid and the U.S. would revise the security treaty. Consequently, the security treaty is the main barrier in our country's way to a non-nuclear status."

Besides referring to "inaccuracies" in wording, the U.S. State Department made a rather clumsy attempt to whitewash itself by asserting that the JCP had misinterpreted the authentic document. The phrase "confidential arrangement under 1960 security treaty" meant the treaty as such, it alleged. But why all these manoeuvres if the message said in plain English that there were American nuclear weapons in Okinawa at the time?

VLADIMIR OVSYANNIKOV
our own correspondent

U.S.A.

The big brother listens in

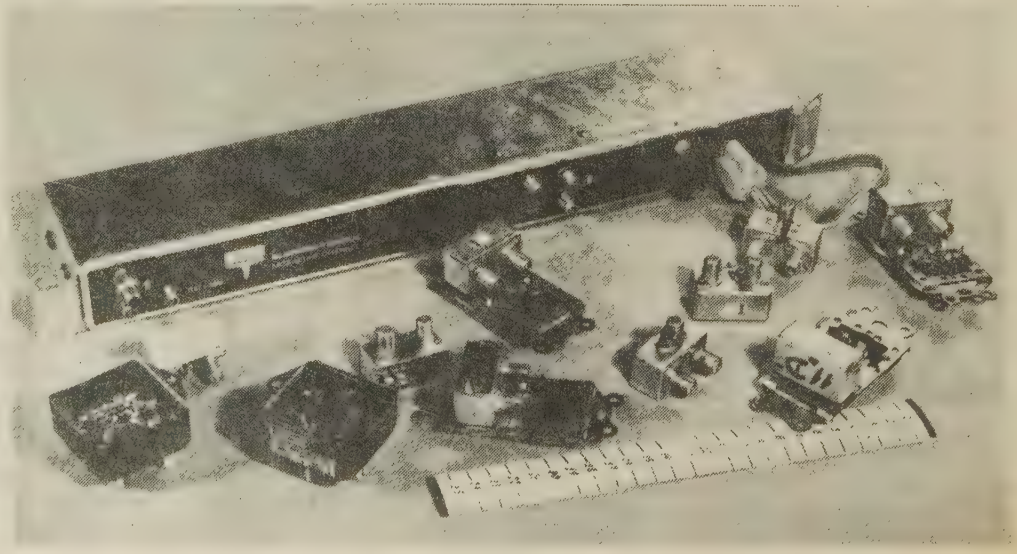
Most American moviegoers and comics readers know from their teens how to bug telephones and tell an ordinary lump of sugar from one with a tiny microphone in it. In the U.S., rank-and-file citizens and presidents, mafiosi and Feds listen in to others' telephone conversations and have their own telephones tapped.

This has long been all in a day's work in America, something to be taken for granted. Yet suddenly, Washington has sounded the alarm: bugging threatens—the existence of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Hotheads demand that the Embassy building be pulled down for security reasons, and that no negotiations be conducted in Moscow lest the Russians hear something they aren't supposed to know. Even the current visit by the U.S. State Secretary Shultz should have been cancelled, they say. True, without the Embassy and without negotiations it would be difficult to judge the Soviet Union's position, but the Americans have made provisions for such a predicament in advance by stuffing Soviet missions with audio and video bugs.

At press conferences in Moscow and Washington on April 9 and 10, representatives of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry demonstrated hundreds of microphones and dozens of different systems extracted, over the past few years, from the walls, floors and service lines of the U.S.S.R. Embassy and trade mission in the U.S., the Soviet Consulate-General in San Francisco and other offices. U.S. secret services have planted all kinds of microphones and sensors in offices and apartments. Car conversations and bedroom sounds, the clatter of typewriters and the humming of office equipment were all sucked in by the "vacuum cleaner" that sorted them out in search of information damaging to the Soviet Union, its institutions and its citizens.

The CIA, the FBI, the National Security Agency and other such intelligence bodies were really hard at it, often duplicating each other's efforts. There seems to be a great deal of competition but very little trust between them. This on its own could explain the impudence and scale of this electronic espionage.

ALEXANDER POLYUKHOV



The U.S. secret service has turned this community aerial into a system for listening in on residents of the apartment block of the Soviet mission at the United Nations.

A fashionable malaise

The fashionable epidemic in the West —spy mania—is unquestionably of political origin. The latest flare-up of the fever in France was, in my view, caused by a number of specific factors. But first a few words about the scenario.

This time the "Soviet Agents Season" in Paris opened with the French secret services discovering a group of people allegedly interested in the secrets of the Ariane rocket. The wife of one of the group was a Soviet citizen, and that of another a Romanian. This was sufficient reason to level indiscriminate charges at the "Eastern bloc countries," arrest the "spies" and then expel six officials working for Soviet organizations from France.

Moscow naturally retaliated in kind and asked six French officials who had been engaged in affairs "incompatible with their duties," as it is usually put, to leave the Soviet Union.

Soon, however, without any fuss, the French police began to release the people they had detained one by one. The first to be released was Lyudmila Variguina, a Soviet citizen, and wife of Frenchman Pierre Verdier, who had been imprisoned without any grounds in violation of the Soviet-French consular convention, the Helsinki Final Act and international norms.

Realizing that they had blundered, the secret services released the name of another "Kremlin agent"— a cipher clerk who died three years ago. Then the "spy season" ended.

But what lies behind this slanderous campaign?

The first factor is connected with Soviet-French cooperation. It is not to everyone's taste. There are those who, for ideological reasons, cannot bear the thought of a Soviet person next to them and hate even the word "Moscow.' Others feel similarly for reasons of competition. Others again, owe their prejudice to the influence of friends abroad, especially in the U.S. Under the cover of a furore about agents, they feel they can damage the accumulated experience and tradition of friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and France.

This also occurred in the past. But in the past there were people in Paris who could make them see reason. Now too, voices are being raised and it is being pointed out that Paris is seeking the development of bilateral ties with Moscow, and that it values such a prospect. But isn't this prospect fading, together with the declining role of France in East-West relations?

The second factor is our policy of restructuring. The profound changes at work in the country, its democratization —all this is an irritant to some people in the French capital. Certain circles in France are trying to preserve in the minds of the French the obsolete stereotype of the Soviet Union as a totalitarian state, a Gulag. Spies are meat and drink to them. They have nothing to counterpose to mounting Soviet prestige in the world and in France. And so they resort to the old cards: Eastern bloc agents, the hand of Moscow, Soviet technological backwardness.

The third reason: each time the chance of a major disarmament agreement being signed looms on the horizon, either in the United States or in a West European country, Moscow tricks "unexpectedly" come to light.

And this is happening now. The positions of West and East on medium-range missiles have come closer together. Moscow has opened the door to an agreement. And so, as if to order, we hear of American Marines caught in KGB nets, listening devices in the American embassy in Moscow, and a Soviet network in France trying to get hold of the blueprints of the Ariane engines. The spy scares flare up all the stronger the less convincingly the West replies to Moscow's disarmament proposals.

And the fourth factor. When the spy hysteria was at its height, the French National Assembly was discussing the military budget for 1987-91. A distinctive feature of the budget was its provision for a considerable increase in nuclear and conventional weapons. Allocations were to go up by 40 per cent. For the first time it was openly stated that France would produce chemical weapons. Spy hysteria is an excellent way of securing extra funds.

In conclusion a few words about a subject close to Paris's heart—humanitarian contacts, free exchanges and the reunification of families. So much has been written about the unfortunate Lyudmila Variguina-Verdier. But it was the Paris Figaro that outdid all other papers and magazines. The paper even introduced a new term for Soviet citizens married to French nationals: high-risk individuals. Because "any Frenchman, whose job gives him access to secret information" becomes a target of police attention.

Perhaps not very politely, but unambiguously, Le Figaro warns its compatriots against danger. It seeks to justify in advance any measures against anyone who has strayed from the straight and narrow path. The person could be moved to a new position in the interests of the country. Nor does the paper have any objections to strict control over foreign wives, especially if they come from the Soviet Union. "How many of them are spies?" Le Figaro asks in panic.

Everything seems clear. When the main, in fact the only reason for the arrest of a woman, the wife of a French official, is her Soviet citizenship, and mixed marriages and the reunification of families are seen as entailing high risks for those concerned, then the spirit and letter of the Helsinki agreement are being violated.

ALEXANDER IGNATOV

By way of a comment

According to well-informed sources in the European Space Agency (ESA), the Ariane case is a ruse by the French secret service to revive flagging interest in the French space programme. The Ariane carrier-rocket engine's record of abortive trials might discourage a number of West European countries from identifying with this ambitious French project, Paris fears. Against the background of the progress made by the U.S.S.R. and the P.R.C. in space research, the Ariane rocket failures could undermine the French position on the world space technology and services market.

The above-mentioned sources describe as "dubious" Paris's allegations that the Russians, who are far ahead of the French in carrier-rocket research and development, are interested in the faulty Ariane rocket: after all, it is the French who have to catch up with the Russians in space, not the other way round. Can the French government conceal the shortcomings of its national space programme by inciting spy mania, ESA asks with reason.

MIKHAIL PUTINKOVSKY

Why return to a nuclear-free world?

LOTHAR RUEHL

One can easily imagine a nuclear-free world. It is enough to recall man's past. Recreating such a world would mean reversing the course of history. It would be a futile attempt.

Nuclear weapons will remain because the technology for producing them is impossible to obliterate. Moreover, the possession of nuclear weapons has ceased to be the exclusive privilege of the Soviet Union and the United States. Britain, France and China have built considerable nuclear arsenals and joined the "nuclear club."

Supposedly, a number of other countries have a limited quantity of nuclear weapons and are about to become nuclear powers. The more widespread nuclear weapons become, the more difficult it will be to take steps to eliminate them.

It would also be impossible to control a comprehensive nuclear weapon ban worldwide. A great many loopholes would therefore appear for devious actions, and the concomitant recriminations, which make the present stability in East-West relations extremely fragile. These actions could create political tension among countries with nuclear capabilities over ways of interpreting, applying and observing the appropriate treaty.

For decades nuclear weapons have ensured stability in East-West relations and hence, peace in Europe, and between the United States and the Soviet Union. Not a few arguments could be cited here to show that the antagonism in East-West relations would lead to armed clashes were it not for the risk of the belligerents sustaining irreparable losses.

The Cuban crisis of 1962 dramatized the need for East and West to find—notwithstanding their differences—a mutually acceptable means of coexistence in order to survive in the nuclear age.

True, such commonsense has taken root only in East-West relations, as is evidenced by the numerous wars that have been fought and are still being fought outside the framework of these relations, the Iran-Iraq conflict, for instance. The thesis that peace will be more secured through the elimination of all nuclear arsenals has yet to be proved.

The 120-odd conventional or revolutionary wars that have taken place outside Europe since 1945 add little, if any, weight to the view that nuclear disarmament could strengthen peace.

It is necessary that efforts towards preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons bring good results. They should also lead to a substantial reduction in nuclear arsenals. One must, however, be sceptical about chances of success in nuclear non-proliferation.

If the further spread of nuclear weapons is not halted, the following question may arise: to what extent could the new nuclear powers change the political alignment of forces in the world? This cannot yet be predicted with any accuracy. For a long time they would play only a regional role.

It is to be expected that the new nuclear powers will not remain the only ones to possess nuclear weapons, as the other countries in their regions will try to prevent nuclear superiority over them and acquire nuclear weapons too. This is likely to create regional nuclear equilibrium, with nuclear armaments performing the same function as in East-West relations, the function of stabilizing strategic ties and helping to establish a stable system of military security.

Nuclear stalemate has thus a positive aspect, naturally, till the arms race is checked and effective control ensured.

Many arguments can be furnished to show that the world will remain nuclear in the future too. All countries will have to adhere to the following imperative: on the one hand, to control nuclear weapons so that they do not resort to them in the event of conflict, and, on the other, to make use of the desire for balance and restraint engendered by these weapons to maintain international security. This presupposes a stable balance between the conventional armed forces of the states concerned.

The first important step at the talks should be a reduction in the armed forces and armaments of East and West to a level sufficient for effective deterrence and reliable defence. Approximate parity could be achieved in this way between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO in Europe, particularly in the main area of confrontation, Central Europe. This means that the Warsaw Treaty's superiority in conventional arms should be whittled down. Reliable security would enable the countries to promote their mutual relations to their common benefit.

For almost two decades East and West have been trying to conclude agreements on the mutual limitation and reduction of armaments. The strongest motive force behind these unremitting efforts is the devastating power of nuclear weapons. These weapons have strongly emphasized the need for stable relations and for advancing ever new proposals for a successful conclusion of the talks.

Such an earnest desire on the part of opposing states for rapprochement, for averting war between them is unprecedented in history. Though obstacles in the way of talks, and mutual distrust are still great, possibilities of reaching agreements have nevertheless appeared.

The Reykjavik summit has opened up the prospect of a breakthrough, the prospect of disarmament and not just arms limitation, as was the case in the SALT process from 1969 to 1979. The new policy, based on cooperation, will be a long-term one. But it can have lasting success only if East-West relationships develop favourably, for history shows that progress in this field depends on the general level of relations.

Détente should not be confined to arms control policy. The will for détente must determine the whole line of action of states, such as recognition of the security interests of the other side (not only global but also regional for that matter), renunciation of the use of force in international relations, and the protection of human rights.

Confidence will only increase if the avowed intention to renounce the use of force is backed up by action. Respect of the right of each nation to live according to its own ideas should restrain any attempts to impose one's will on others.

Mutual distrust, inherited from the past, is a major obstacle in the way of better relations between East and West.

The article by Lothar Ruehl, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence (Federal Republic of Germany), is a contribution to our opinion poll on the subject of a nuclear-free world.

In the first place, it hinders progress in the field of arms control. When the security of one's own country is concerned, the statements of the other side should not be taken on trust. But at the same time the other side cannot be denied trust completely. The partner's observance of the treaty should be verifiable, and confidence must exist that possible violations of the treaty will be revealed in good time.

No major success in disarmament policy can be expected unless the military potential and plans of the other side are clearly known and an agreement on effective verification is achieved. These are all confidence-building measures, without which it will not be possible to clear the road leading from confrontation to cooperation for a lengthy period of time.

That is why the results of the Stockholm conference on confidence and security-building measures and disarmament in Europe are so important and must be applied in the military sphere.

War must never again be started from German soil. This fundamental principle means for us Germans more than just a historic and moral commitment. It is of vital significance for us, because no war in Europe would spare us. It would be a dangerous simplification in our time to fear nuclear war and belittle the consequences of conventional war. The latter would also have terrible consequences for both German states.

Focussing on the nuclear problem often obscures the fact that the correlation of conventional forces is of no less critical importance for European security. This is especially significant if the reduction of nuclear weapons begins.

We regard the Warsaw Treaty's considerable superiority in conventional armaments and chemical weapons as a grave threat to us. To have greater confidence, we must know for certain that the Warsaw Treaty states are prepared to cut down their forces to reach an equilibrium and that the remaining armed forces would be unable to conduct surprise and large-scale offensive operations. Military parity and the renunciation of aggressive intentions will help to remove the feeling of threat and, consequently, distrust. NATO has responded to the initiative put forward by General Secretary Gorbachev, and this readiness of the North Atlantic alliance for negotiation of tremendous importance to our security is raising great hopes in our hearts. ■

The harm of preconceived notions

VALENTIN FALIN

I have known Lothar Ruehl for many years. At first, I noticed his extraordinary speeches on problems of security and military strategy. Later, I met him personally and we had discussions. I cannot say we always found a common denominator, especially on concrete issues. There is no denying, however, that Lothar Ruehl was able to defend his position and do so logically in his own way.

But then what happened? Where is Ruehl's logic and ability to work with facts in his new capacity as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence? Of course, the post obliges him to change his tune. But to such an extent! Or perhaps it could not be otherwise? The preconceived, now official, idea requires far-fetched arguments intended to stir up passions. It is indeed a preconceived idea, even if presented as "healthy scepticism." This idea is a medley of distorted concepts, an arbitrary—if not cynical—treatment of historical experience.

Recreating a nuclear-free world, Ruehl thinks, would mean "reversing the course of history." This is impossible and even harmful, he believes. Any proofs? The Secretary of State writes that since the nuclear weapon was produced, the United States and the Soviet Union have never fought each other.

But let me remind you that these powers had not fought with each other even before the atom was militarized, apart from the U.S. armed intervention in 1918-22 in the north European part of Soviet Russia and in the Far East. Few would dispute that the splitting of the atom has split the world and drawn a deeper and harsher line between the Soviet Union and the United States than any other event in the past.

Attributing a constructive role to the nuclear weapon, transferring part of the functions of politics to this instrument of violence, is not a step towards greater security, more humane international relations, and a brighter chapter in the history of our civilization. The human genius, doomed to perpetual movement in power circles, is bound to devise military technologies that will excel the nuclear weapon. Does superfatal destructive power mean greater security? The worse the better, since the West still relies on strength?

Whether a new monster will appear or not is yet to be seen. Something else is of greater urgency today: as the arms race continues, more countries are achieving nuclear status. Lothar Ruehl does not think this cause for alarm. The spread of nuclear weapons, he believes, will bring about only local, regional changes, and those rather positive than negative. He also predicts that the strategic links would then stabilize.

Revelations of this kind are especially odious now, when efforts are being made to rid the world of the nuclear nightmare. For the detonation of a small part of the nuclear weapons that have been accumulated would be more than enough to kill all life on earth. Isn't it a hint that NATO is prepared to sacrifice both the anti-ballistic missile and nuclear non-proliferation treaties? This calls for closer scrutiny.

I am not going to argue with Ruehl over his statement about the aggressive intentions of the Warsaw Treaty and its superiority in conventional and chemical weapons. The Secretary of State, I believe, knows the utterances of U.S. Secretary of State Shultz and the documents of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff in which the idea of an imbalance is refuted.

Perhaps Lothar Ruehl believes that these and similar statements and studies are not known to the Soviet public. Or perhaps West German officials claim to be more sagacious than others. Konrad Adenauer spotted "enemy" planes that eluded American radars in the West German sky. Are the present West German leaders less vigilant?

One thing is not clear here. If the West is concerned about the Warsaw Treaty countries' superiority in armed forces and armaments, why is it dragging its feet in accepting their proposal to start negotiations and reach an agreement on big cuts in the potentials of both sides, by a million servicemen by the early 1990s?

They are perhaps afraid to enter into negotiations, because falsified information intended to mislead the public cannot be put on the negotiating table if one really wants to achieve equal security and reliable peace. ■

Tax trouble

April is the time of tax returns in the U.S., and this April is characterized by novelties in this area. The tax reform law adopted last October goes into force. True, the reform will be completed in 1988, and 1987 is only a transitional stage. And now, when the time has come to pay, many Americans are asking why all the trouble. Will the tax reform, as Reagan expects, boost the economy which is heading for a slump?

Filling out tax returns has never been easy. To assess income tax, many factors have to be taken into account. You have to indicate whether you are married or single, how many children you have, whether you rent a flat or live in your own house, whether you have acquired stocks and shares, made donations to charity and presents to your children, when you last bought a new car, and so on. The past year's inflation rate and the estimate for next year are also taken into consideration.

Yet it is more complex than that. The old system of taxation graded individual incomes, with different tax rates for each "band." So, in 1985 a family had to pay 16 per cent of a $12,390-16,650 annual income in taxes, 18 per cent if its income was in the $16,650-21,020 bracket; 22 per cent on $21,020-25,600, etc., progressively. On incomes in excess of $169,020, 50 per cent was levied. There is, however, a reservation which puts the well-to-do in a favourable position: division of incomes into taxable and non-taxable permits the most well-to-do quite lawfully to name lower total incomes in their tax returns. Senator George Mitchell estimated that—paradoxical though it may seem—in 1984, 30,000 Americans with incomes over $250,000 either did not pay a single cent in taxes or got off with token sums.

In short, filing a tax form has become such a difficult matter that, Americans jest, Einstein could not have done it without expert help. Responsible for control of tax payments is the Treasury's Internal Revenue Service employing some 70,000 inspectors. But even they often have to rack their brains, for the full tax code takes up several thousand pages. A mistake in this matter is a punishable offence: you can be fined or even jailed.

Lawyers know that the more complicated the law, the easier it is to circumvent. There are many loopholes in the intricate tax law that make it possible to evade tax payments on aggregate incomes. Tax scandals break out regularly in the U.S., involving more often than not high-placed government officials. And of course it is the monopolies, especially the military-industrial concerns, that are sharpest at tax evasion.

Here it should be recalled that on its advent to power the present administration made lavish gifts to big business—it lowered profit tax and introduced big tax rebates for depreciation.

While these gifts to corporations cut budget revenue by billions of dollars, for rank and file citizens federal income tax is far from being the only levy. To be entitled to an old-age pension, health care and unemployment benefits, wage earners have to pay regularly about 7 per cent of their earnings to federal pension and insurance funds. Plus sizable local and state taxes, not to mention a surcharge on consumer goods.

Hence the population's growing discontent with the tax burden. The administration's hopes of patching up the budget through accelerated economic growth also floundered. That is why the White House decided on a tax reform to make the system less cumbersome.

Who is to blame?

The Belgian port of Zeebrugge has been a major talking point in press, television and radio commentaries worldwide for over a month.

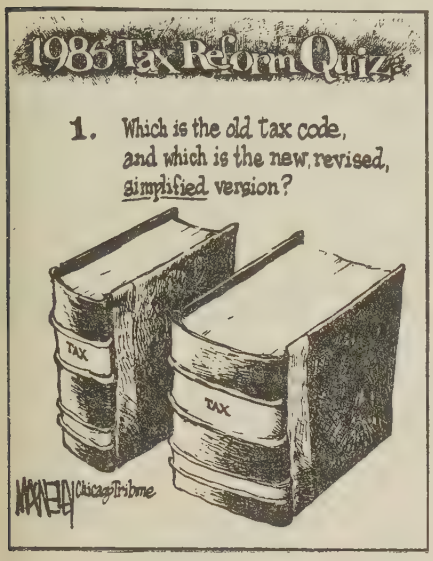
Journalists, seamen and experts continue to discuss the accident and try to reconstruct events on the basis of the facts and evidence obtained to date.

On the evening of March 6, the British ferry Herald of Free Enterprise left Zeebrugge for Dover. About 1,500 metres out of port, it suddenly made an about-turn and capsized. A sand bar prevented it from sinking completely, leaving its starboard above water. Some 400 passengers and crew were rescued, but 200 or so died.

What caused the accident? There is as yet no official answer to this question and committees of inquiry are still at work. They have plenty of riddles to solve. How was it that this large ferry (132 m. long, 23 m. wide, and displacing about 8,000 tonnes), built in the F.R.G. in 1980, capsized almost instantly? Most experts agree that the ferry lost its balance, having taken on water as the doors of its two car decks were open contrary to instructions. Why weren't the doors properly closed? This question, like many others, remains unanswered. How did it happen that in perfectly calm weather water found its way through the doors to the decks 2.5 metres above sea level? Some experts think that the water ballast which "holds the ship down" in port so that cars can drive on and off, had not been fully discharged. If that was the case, the ferry's captain and crew are guilty of gross negligence.

Eugene Colson, a highly authoritative Belgian expert, and a co-founder of the International Merchantman Masters' As-

The old tax system had fifteen individual income tax rates, ranging from 11 to 50 per cent of the sum taxed. The law Congress adopted provides for an intermediate version to be operative this year, with five categories of tax rates ranging from 11 to 38.5 per cent. The reform will be completed in 1988, with two individual income tax rates, of 15 and 28 per cent. The maximum tax rate on corporations will go down to 34 per cent, and many—but not all—tax benefits will be abrogated.



Cartoon from the Chicago Tribune (U.S.A.)

Who is to gain from the reform President Reagan has termed the most important legislative initiative of his second term in office? To believe him, the corporations are to be the greatest losers, and families with low incomes will gain most.

Indeed, in the next five years big business is to pay $100 billion more in taxes than under the old tax law, and individual taxpayers will pay less by the same amount. Thanks to lower individual tax rates, the burden on the population is expected to diminish. Families living below the official poverty line are exempt from taxation altogether.

In fact, however, the poor will not gain much. The meagre dozens of dollars they will now save are a pittance by comparison with the thousands left to rich families who will profit most. The reform legalizes many of the loopholes used by families with incomes over $200,000 a year. "In Mr Reagan's America, the rich are no longer expected to pay high taxes," the Financial Times observed. At the same time, about 20 million families in the medium-income bracket will be taxed more heavily. Significantly, unemployment benefit is also to be taxed.

As for the monopolies, despite the overall raising of taxes on big business, in many industries they will pay 9-14 per cent less than previously. For other corporations taxes will be raised, but not by more than 9 per cent. In general corporation tax rates will be lower. Only those who enjoyed special privileges under the old tax law will pay more, as, for example, oil and gas companies. Thus, the reform merely levels out corporation tax rates. In the long run, it is the consumers who will foot the bill, for prices of commodities and services go up with businessmen's higher tax outlays.

What effect will the reform have on the U.S. economy? Most experts agree that in the immediate future it will stimulate it negligibly, if at all. Some even think it may bring recession nearer. It may result, the New York Times has said, in, for instance, diminished housing construction, and a slump in the chemical, metallurgical and machine-building industries.

Judging from press reports, the bulk of the population are not overenthusiastic about the reform. Nor has it lessened the huge federal budget deficit. Congressional Budget Office experts predict that it will go up by another $17 billion in the 1988 fiscal year due to the tax reform. It is not, therefore, fortuitous that some Congressmen have already begun discussing a new tax reform bill.

ALEXANDER DEIKIN

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sociation, and many of his colleagues point to the danger inherent in the design of ferries of this class. Eugene Colson described them as "floating coffins." Their car decks are not partitioned as this would slow down loading and unloading, and increase the building and operation costs of such craft. The economic advantages such a construction offers are cancelled out by the enormous disadvantage of there being no barriers in the way of water if it floods in. Should this happen, water fills the hold, and the ship sinks.

The Herald of Free Enterprise lay on its left side for a month and a day. On April 7 the huge 6,500-tonne ferry half-filled with 15,000 tonnes of water and sand, plus about 130 cars and trucks on board, was righted in a complex, computer-devised operation.

Following nine hours of hard work, the ferry is now lying on the sand bar with its hull down. The ship is half-sunk, but practically all the deck superstructures are above water. The next operation is water-proofing (mending damaged portholes and closing the stern doors). Then the water is to be pumped out, and after the ferry has been refloated it will be towed to a Zeebrugge wharf. This will happen late this month.

Immediately after the ferry's left side had been lifted off the sand bar, Belgian and British Navy divers got down to work retrieving bodies. Before April 7, the number of dead had been officially put at 61 (the number of bodies found by then), and 140 were reported missing. Since then divers have extracted 113 more bodies from the deathtrap. Dozens of bodies still remain in the submerged part of the craft, beyond reach until the water and sand that fill it have been pumped out. After over a month in seawater, the bodies will be hard to identify. Police and medical experts have collected in advance all information which may facilitate this tragic procedure.

VYACHESLAV BOIKOV

Brussels

● ECOLOGY

The branch we're sitting on

People had learned to deal mortal blows to nature long before the industrial revolution began in the 19th century. Prehistoric cultures had made fairly deep inroads on the environment. It took them longer than us, of course, to turn woodlands into desert: bulldozers and electric saws have greatly accelerated matters. But the results were the same.... True, the unintentional vandalism of ancient people sometimes cost them their lives.

A case in point is the fate of the Anasazi Indians, who lived in the southwest of what is now the U.S.A., on the territory of today's New Mexico and Arizona states. In the 11th-12th centuries the Anasazis built 75 towns with complex road networks and irrigation canals in Chaco Canyon. The towns had houses up to five storeys high, with 800 and more rooms each. Shortly before the year 1200 the Anasazis suddenly abandoned their dwellings—compelled to do so, it has hitherto been believed, by a long spell of drought. The magazine U.S. News and World Report carried a story recently, however, about the American geoscientist Julio Betancourt, who studied logs found in Indian settlements with an electron microscope. It turned out that the Anasazis' real problem was shortage of wood. For two successive centuries they had systematically felled trees in the forests around their towns for firewood and building materials. In the end they had to drag logs from far-off mountains 50 miles away and more. Wood from tree varieties growing considerable distances from Chaco Canyon was found in the settlements. The logs had no cuts or dents, which means that instead of hauling them, people carried these heavy trunks, weighing up to 300 kilos each, on their shoulders for weeks.

Finally, they gave up.

It looks as if the dwellers of Easter Island also sawed off the branch they were sitting on. The island was densely forested when the Polynesians settled there in about 400 A.D. In the early 18th century the first Europeans who landed on it found the island bare, save for stone statues. In the opinion of scientists, the destruction of the forests accelerated soil erosion and reduced crop yields; moreover, it left the natives without canoes and, consequently, without fish. There being no logs, they lost the only means of transporting and erecting the statues, which weighed up to 85 tons each.

Food shortages and disputes over plots of arable land resulted in wars, as evidenced by the enormous quantities of stone arrowheads found on the island. As a result, the population gradually died out. Recent findings belie assertions that changes in flora and fauna, and human migrations, are due to climatic factors.

An Anasazi Indian settlement: by cutting down the surrounding forests, the people doomed themselves to extinction.
Photo from U.S. News and World Report

● WILDLIFE

Chatting with a dolphin

Dolphins communicate with each other by means of an extremely complex language—"whistle patter." Can they understand human speech? The American scientists Herman, Richards and Wolz have found that they can.

The tame dolphins Phenix and Akea learned to understand computer-synthesized sound combinations, and promptly came to identify these sounds with actions or objects. The scientists got the dolphins to understand fairly complex phrases like: "Phenix, touch the ring with your tail, toss up the ring." The dolphins' "vocabulary" now comprises 16 words designating objects; 11 expressing actions, four direction indicators; and words that signify the cancelling of an order, consent, negation and censure. The animals carried out an order even when the phrase composed by the computer was meaningless. For instance, the command "toss the water" sent a dolphin heading for a tap and hitting the flow of running water twice or three times with its head, as if in an attempt to toss off the flow.

Can dolphins imitate human speech? They are known to be able to emit very complex sound signals. Herman and his colleagues trained Akea to repeat sounds produced by a sound generator. Finally, the animal came to identify these sounds with certain objects. Upon the completion of the "course," the dolphin was shown five different objects, in random order, 167 times. The experiment was a success: the dolphin named them correctly in 91 per cent of cases.

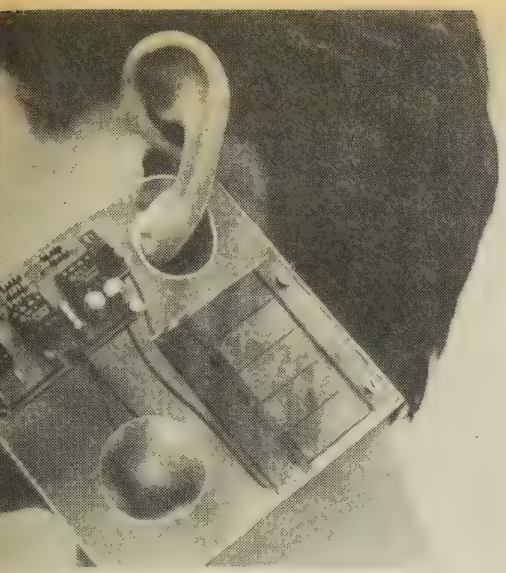
These ear-ring nothings and with a solar crickets. Pleas

● ASTRONO

A sup and neutr

In the nig astronomers observatory d bright new sta lanic Cloud from the earth ing a signally plosion of a phenomenon served by C astronomers in bright star ex constellation; seen for 23 d

"This is the to have been nes Kepler's director of th near Florence, for the Italian "Its mass is the Sun. As exhausts its



ned for girls of fashion who have wearied of sweet est German designer Walter Gries has fitted them evice that mimics bird song and the chirping of ear, perhaps, but a bit on the heavy side.
EPA-TASS photo

● ECONOMY

Who's got more robots

The United States is threatened with lagging seriously behind its main industrial competitors, the magazine U.S. News and World Report warns. American industrialists, for instance, are introducing new manufacturing processes into production at a slower rate than their Japanese counterparts.

Though invented in the U.S., industrial robots have found widespread industrial application in Japan, which now has 67,000 industrial robots as against America's just over 14,000. More than 60 per cent of the robots installed at U.S. industrial plants last year were of Japanese make. In the opinion of many experts, American manufactured goods can be expected to become more competitive only if Washington allocates much greater funds to non-military research. So far the situation leaves much to be desired.

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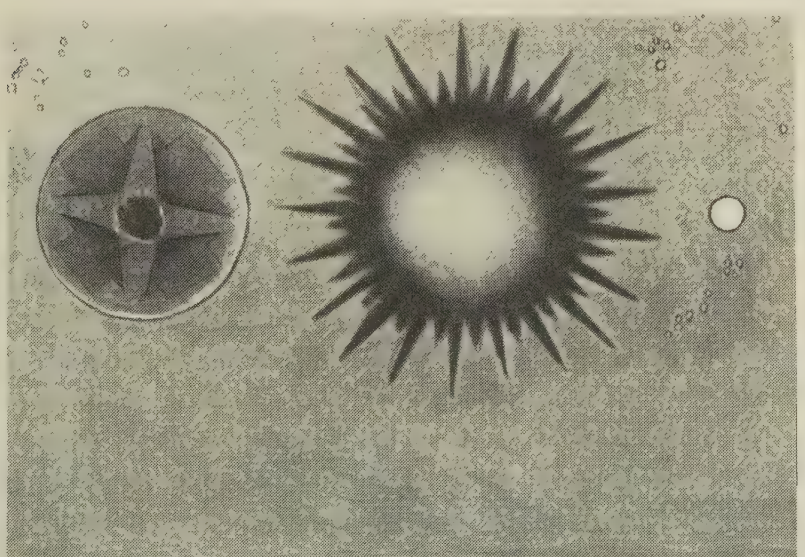
bruary 23, Cerro Tolo extremely rge Magel- ight years re witness- nt: the ex- a. Such a been ob- Japanese n a super- the Taurus could be ghts.

supernova ince Johan- nco Pacini, observatory respondent Panorama. es that of such a star resources

generated by thermonuclear fusion, the gases constituting its internal substance can no longer stand the force of gravity, and the matter collapses, as it were, and compresses, forming a super-dense object (see drawing). At the same time, the external envelope of the star explodes and erupts into space at a speed



of about 15,000 km per second; the eruption is accompanied by a dazzling glow. The first thing we shall try to find out after the supernova's gas envelope disperses," he went on, "is whether a pulsar—i.e., a stellar body consisting of neutrons and rotating around its axis at a dizzy speed—has formed inside. It was just such a star that formed as a result of an explosion in the Crab Nebula in 1054."

The emergence of a supernova (named Shelton 1987) so "close" to earth is a priceless gift not only to astronomers but also to physicists concerned with subatomic particles. Five new neutrinos were registered within seven seconds by a recorder at a laboratory under Mont Blanc, where the Turin Cosmogeophysics Institute and the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences carry out joint research. Neutrinos, rare particles possessing extraordinary properties, are produced by a supernova explosion when electrons penetrate the atomic nucleus as a result of a nuclear reaction.

The recording of the neutrinos is a major scientific achievement.

● MEDICINE

Pills instead of slimming diets

Experts at the Blagoveshchensk Medical Institute have suggested an entirely new solution to the problem of shedding excess weight. They have developed a device which temporarily excludes part of the small intestine from the digestive process thus helping an overweight person get rid of extra fat at a steady rate. The device comes in a soluble capsule. The patient swallows the capsule like an ordinary pill, and it passes easily through the digestive tract all the way to the small intestine, where the capsule dissolves, and the device, stripped of its "vehicle," attaches itself to a specific place for a specific period. Having secured a "foothold" in the small intestine, the device does not obstruct it. Food is discharged from the organism unhindered, without being assimilated. As a result, it is possible to lose weight without eliminating any delicacy from one's diet. The procedure is absolutely painless and can be used repeatedly.

RESTRUCTURING AND THE YOUNG

VITALY GANYUSHKIN

For several days the attention of the entire country was focused on the 20th Congress of the Young Communist League. Because twenty is a round number? That could be one reason, but not the main one. There is another, far more significant one: the wave of renewal sweeping the country which has drawn all the healthy forces of society into restructuring our way of life and thought to achieve universal acceleration.

In preparation for its congress the Komsomol had a lot to say about itself, not always favourable, but always constructive, and public opinion—the adult population—said the rest. The congress will elucidate many of the points raised in this dialogue, but not all i's will be dotted or t's crossed —it is too early for that with the restructuring going on.

THE GROWTH OF THE KOMSOMOL'S RANKS. There is such a concept. But today the dialectics of development compel us to add to it the concept of "growing pains."

When it comes to numerical growth, everything was always more or less allright. Today the YCL has forty million members, practically the entire younger generation of the country. There is not much room for further growth. But in the discussions that preceded the congress, a number of voices were raised in favour of limiting growth when it results in the quality of membership being ignored: let's take them all, and if necessary we shall raise them to our standards —that's what the Komsomol is for. But that is a matter for the young to decide themselves. What we find interesting is the new approach in the spirit of restructuring: quantity versus quality. The more the merrier. But what will happen to them in the ranks of the YCL, which their leaders and activists have always been so intent on increasing? That seems to be the question of questions that the rank and file, and through them society, have put to the congress.

We often say he can't see the wood for the trees when people get bogged down in insignificant details and miss the main point. On the contrary, the greatest failing of Komsomol organizations has been the inability to see the trees for the wood. If we take the "wood" to mean overall results, the number of campaigns and people, then the "trees" are the individual members involved or left out in the cold, for whom there is more to life than the Komsomol. Indeed, they join the Komsomol in order to learn to live worthily: to pursue their personal aspirations in such a way as to benefit all, to find fulfilment—in other words, to quote Nikolai Ostrovsky, not to have to feel remorse for years spent wastefully. And that was what the Komsomol ignored when it concentrated on the wood at the expense of the trees, although the well-being of the "wood" can be guaranteed only when each of its "trees" is taken care of properly.

And that is why informal associations of young people began to appear, provoking such heated arguments before the congress. Basement sports groups, amateur art groups, street groups, youngsters living in the same house, and just gangs that do not know what to do with themselves. Millions of youngsters! And it turned out that although officially they belonged to the YCL, in actual fact they were not part of it. They refused to be tempted by such rich baits as the imposing Palaces of Youth. . . . Why? Nothing to interest them there! One lad even went so far as to decide to resign from the YCL. When his case was brought up at the meeting of his Komsomol committee, he said: "Because it bores me. . . ." So what went wrong? Had he been overlooked, or was there something lacking in this drive for numbers? And if you recall that, in many cases, the discos designed to give young people a chance to relax and let off steam were turned into political education meetings, the questions are more than just rhetorical.

In the final count, I would say the trouble is that everything in the YCL has aged: YCL members, their leaders, and their organization. Not in years, no, the age limit has remained the same. They have aged at heart, they have lost some of their sharpness of vision and perception, the speed with which they react to life around them. They have become passengers in an enormous jumbo jet fastened to their seats by their rules and regulations. YCL sociologists conducted a poll on the progress of restructuring in YCL cells. What they discovered was the stagnant and standardized mode of thought, especially among the Komsomol's leaders. An outdated mode, unworkable by present-day standards. What a paradox! Young people, not yet fully mature, but already with an outdated way of thinking. How had this situation arisen?

"THE YOUNG ARE UNRULY, DISOBEDIENT AND HAVE NO RESPECT FOR THEIR ELDERS. They reject the truth, and do not accept tradition. No one understands them and they don't want to be understood. They will bring ruin to the world and will be its last survivors."

These words belong to Pharaoh Amenhotep, who lived 3,500 years ago, and cannot be ignored, if only because throughout these three and half millennia, the pharaoh type has not become extinct in human society. Blue-blooded and ordinary mortals alike, they invariably refused to accept everything that came "after them." Unfortunately, the first socialist society in the world has not been able to avoid its share of them, although it still continues its irreconcilable struggle against hangovers from the past, which sometimes turn out to be acquired shortcomings.

One point, an important one, should, however, be made: we do not believe that the differences in the perception of the world around us by the older generation and the younger constitute a conflict of generations. But to get back to the point. A letter from Inga R., a young girl from Uchkuduk, was published shortly before the YCL congress in Komsomolskaya Pravda: "Why this attack on us young people, simply because we think differently from you? Everywhere—at school and at home—you hear 'In our day. . .' You've got to realize that this is no longer 'your day.' We are different. Why do you take us to task for our hairdos, for wearing metal?. . . Stop teaching us, stop trying to remake us—that is bad, that is wrong —we are no longer tied to our mothers' apron-strings. Why do you have a negative attitude to everything we do? We simply cannot agree with you. And it is unlikely that you will persuade me."

That is the emotional reply of today's youth to Amenhotep and his present-day successors. And here is another turn in the perpetual dialogue-argument between generations: "The revolutionary process of restructuring requires an acutely critical approach to many aspects of our life, to relations at work,

to ethical norms and moral criteria. Yet these norms and criteria, our way of life was shaped by our fathers! I am not speaking personally of my father or yours. But of the generation that preceded ours, those who were our age twenty years ago. That was when complacency originated in our society, when wishful thinking became the fashion, it was then that you said one thing at home and did another at work, it was then that the gap between words and deeds began. So in the broader sense our parents are responsible? But actually it means those whom we love, who gave us life!"

This cry from the heart from a YCL member, engineer Yevgeny Talyzin, 25, was also published in Komsomolskaya Pravda in a regular Difficult Question column. Yes, it is difficult. But it has to be answered, answered by the Komsomol, the young and their parents.... The question applies to the social genetic code of Soviet generations and we have nothing to hide from each other: this is not the time for mutual recrimination, but for a frank dialogue and joint action in which the experience of the older generation is fired by the vigour of youth.

The pre-congress discussion revealed that, whether the modern pharaohs like it or not, a person's convictions, his outlook are not passed on automatically from generation to generation like real estate. Each new generation and each individual works out his or her own outlook—influenced of course by all the public and state institutions—but nevertheless on his own. So no matter how we try to inculcate and impose (as often as not forcibly) our ways of thought and action on those who follow us—they always have done it and will always do it their own way, and not to suit us (Inga wrote "this is no longer your day") but to suit themselves and their children, who in all likelihood will not agree with their parents either. These are the dialectics of human society. They cannot be ignored.

Yet they were—even when the young suggested projects that would affect more than one generation. That is what happened, for instance, with the idea of the team contract in industry—an idea I have followed closely throughout almost my entire journalistic career. This idea is universally known and has received party and state recognition. It represents a new type of organization of work and the shaping of man in his work. It was originally put forward by YCL members led by the present Hero of Socialist Labour and State Prize Winner Vladislav Serikov. It was put forward at a Komsomol shock project—the construction of a polar ore enrichment plant. It took almost ten years for this concept —team contract—to make headway, at least in the press. It took almost as long again for it to become a practical feature of our lives.

And today? An exhibition-fair of scientific and technical projects by young people opened at the National Economic Achievements Exhibition as part of the preparations for the 20th YCL Congress. I was stunned to learn that two thirds of the exhibits had been registered as inventions. But nobody seemed to notice another equally astounding fact—it was not simply an exhibition, but a fair. The Komsomol (and its ingenuity produced all the exhibits) still hopes that the exhibits will find someone to produce them.

During the pre-congress discussions, the YCL critically assessed its own "growing pains": bureaucratization, dogmatism, scholasticism, superficial attitudes, conservatism and timidity. They were corroborated by examples from the past. We can only add that these (and certain other) diseases, which run counter to the very nature of the socialist system, were typical of our whole social life. And it is against them that we are battling in the restructuring process. Again it affects the relationship between fathers and sons. Who is to blame? History will answer that question. What matters is that everyone has now realized this and begun to seek a common language. It would be better to forget the apt, though harmful saying: don't teach your grandmother to suck eggs. They do—human history bears that out most forcibly.

SO WHAT DOES THE "WOOD" EXPECT FROM THE "TREES"? AND THE "TREES" FROM THE "WOOD"?

Put briefly: a climate—political, social and moral—in which the "wood" can flourish and the "trees" bear fruit.

The question in one pre-congress poll was: "Do you think that restructuring is taking place in your Komsomol cell?" Yes—8(!) per cent, To some extent—50 per cent, and No—28 per cent....

On the one hand, it might seem logical: people are considering how to go about restructuring—it is not a matter for hasty decisions. But on the other, why take so long to make up your mind? The reasons should be sought in the same legacy from the past, not so easy to identify, and even harder to overcome.

A short while ago there was a symptomatic conflict: several students at a Komsomol conference spoke out publicly not only about the sorry state of affairs in their own organization, but against the outdated style of leadership of the college authorities, including its party committee. That provoked a heated reaction. The authorities and party committee accused the students of attempting to disrupt the YCL conference. Top party bodies took up the case. The upshot will be clear with time. Formerly, this would have been inconceivable. Not for nothing do some people still try to scare us with the inevitable concomitants of democracy, and in this case, the "unpreparedness" of youth for it.

But the young are ready. That was their chief preoccupation in preparing for their congress, and it even extended to discussions of the rules of the YCL. Here is one proposal that was put forward. The draft YCL rules state as one of the important functions of the Komsomol its involvement "in running affairs of state and public affairs." However, in practice the extent of this participation was determined, say, by the director of a factory who had the right to tell his YCL secretary: "Don't poke your nose into what does not concern you—stick to collecting scrap metal." Now the grass roots have suggested changing this. They have raised the question of the participation of the Komsomol "in implementing socialist self-

A businesslike discussion.
Photo by A. Gushchin

government by the people." So in this too the younger generation seeks to be not only an object of education, but also an active participant in restructuring and the beneficiary of its future fruits.

We speak of the people as a whole, but as in any other society the younger generation is considered a special category, and is—through its organization, naturally—entitled to resolve its specific problems, and those of the country as a whole from its own position. And also from a position of self-management. And there is the rub. When it came to self-management, at least until now, things were pretty bad in the Komsomol. People were ordered about by everyone. And their leaders—secretaries of various ranks—were appointed (it's no secret) with the tacit consent of the organization concerned. That's why the rank and file are now insisting: let us choose our own leaders, ones that we shall follow....

The personal and the public, I and we.... That is what the Komsomol is now debating, as is all of our society. Not to impose the public—often doubtful—on everyone, but to be able to put the personal together in such a way as to channel the efforts of the public at large in the right direction. Then indeed we can say "we are the state," "the rank and file make up the Komsomol."

"I SHALL NEVER PART FROM THE KOMSOMOL, I SHALL ALWAYS REMAIN YOUNG," a popular song goes. This year we celebrate the 70th anniversary of our October Revolution. Since then, since 1917, there has been hardly one amongst us who has not in one way or another been connected with the Komsomol. Generations of Soviet people have grown up in the Komsomol, and are grateful to it. YCLers became Bolsheviks, Communists, heroes, prize winners, trailblazers and enthusiasts, simply conscientious workers—and soldiers when wars broke out—who built that historic phenomenon which has now become the leading force of the modern world and is known as "socialism."

The Komsomol today has 40 million members: the young sap of the nation. That is a force that can afford to be critical of shortcomings in its own house.

This is a time when that house is being put in order, and this involves changes. Essential changes. And everyone has to have his say in the name of truth. Perhaps this applies first and foremost to the YCL.

Of the 4,833 delegates elected to the 20th Congress of the YCL and representing 69 nationalities and ethnic groups in the country, 4,709 have been elected to such a forum for the first time. More than 60 per cent are under 25. So our Leninist Komsomol is getting younger!

AFGHANISTAN

Homecoming

Islam Gala (which is Dari for the "citadel of Islam") is the main frontier post in the west of Afghanistan. Since the D.R.A. government's call for national reconciliation, hardly a day has passed without dozens of Afghan refugees passing the post on their way home. For many of them homecoming means reunion with their families and close relatives. This is why the returnees are attracting nationwide attention, and the Afghan authorities are so preoccupied with solving the refugee problem.

We left Herat, the centre of the province of the same name, for Islam Gala at daybreak in two armoured personnel carriers provided by the military. Our hosts had taken this safety precaution because many extremists have ignored the cease-fire and continue to harass road traffic. We travelled almost all the way to Islam Gala—a distance of 120 km—along a road empty of motor vehicles save for a couple of passengerless, gaudily painted buses which we overtook. But as we approached Islam Gala, three buses packed with passengers, sacks and trunks rushed past in the opposite direction. Even the roofs were crowded. They were Herat-bound repatriates from Iran.

My travelling companion—a reporter of the Herat newspaper Ittifake Islam (the Unity of Islam)—and myself inspected the customs house and then witnessed a colourful spectacle in the central square where men of various ages were dancing the fiery atan dance to a rapid drumbeat. This was the festive dance with which they celebrated their return.

We threaded our way through a dense crowd clapping out the rhythm and approached a grey-bearded patriarch. He turned out to be the head of a family of 32. His name was Mohammad Maaruf.

"We are peasants from Hilmend Province," he said. "We depend on land for our very existence. Landowners and mullahs reigned supreme in our area for centuries. Soon after the revolution our landlord and the mullah started spreading rumours that the new power was godless and threatened Islam, so we had either to fight it, or leave. Following the landlord we abandoned our homes and trekked to Iran. Our life there was sheer hell. We were robbed, pushed about, refused good jobs; our boys were conscripted to the Iranian army and sent to fight against Iraq. We often recalled the saying 'there is no place like home.'"

Maaruf knitted his bushy eyebrows as he told us about the ways in which the Iranian authorities had tried to prevent them returning home.

"My fellow-villagers and myself had decided long ago to come back. But we finally made up our minds only when

IN RETROSPECT

An unreliable ally

On April 2, 1982, the military junta then in power in Argentina ordered the landing of three thousand Argentine troops on the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands. The small British garrison was taken prisoner and shipped home.

The military rulers of Argentina did not expect Britain to involve itself in a serious armed conflict. The generals believed that the dispute over the islands—which had started 150 years before, when Britain wrested them from Argentina by force—would be settled through negotiations after this military expedition.

Subsequent developments showed that General Leopoldo Galtieri, the then President of Argentina, had counted on the "positive neutrality" of the United States, Argentina's military ally.

Many students of the ten-week British-Argentine war are of the opinion that the entire conflict was engineered by the British and U.S. military-industrial complex. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was pushed into the bloody war by circles interested in higher military spending: Britain had at the time planned a substantial reduction in its naval budget. And sure enough, the United States sided with Britain.

The perfidy of Washington in riding roughshod over the interests of the Latin American countries evoked in-

we heard the call for national reconciliation over the radio. The Iranian authorities wouldn't let us out and even tried to banish us to Kurdistan, in Western Iran. We were intimidated in every way. Afghanistan was now ruled by infidels, we were told, who would hang or shoot us if we went back. But we had long known that the real state of affairs in our country was quite different from how they said it was. You can't shut out the sun with the palm of your hand. The enemies of our country will never succeed in concealing the truth from our compatriots who are still abroad."

Later I interviewed those who had returned to the eastern frontier province of Nangarhar from Pakistan. They had much the same things to say. In the outskirts of Jalalabad, the centre of the province, one can now see dozens of tents giving temporary shelter to those who have returned from Pakistan. These people's lives have been disrupted. Deceived by hostile propaganda, they left their homeland at different times. They drank the bitter cup of exile to the dregs, suffered from poverty and disease, missed their relatives and friends. That is why the news of the D.R.A. government's having taken the course of national reconciliation was enthusiastically welcomed by thousands of Afghan refugees in Pakistan as well.

Near one of the tents I met Anwar Majadedi, a carpet weaver, and his family. Not long ago he had had a carpet manufactory in Mazari-Sharif, and the family made a good living by its joint efforts. Nevertheless, a Mazari-Sharif agent of the underground Islamic Party of Afghanistan talked him into leaving. In Pakistan, Majadedi and his relatives were reduced to stark poverty and never had enough to eat.

"It is hard to describe our seven years of suffering and privations abroad," Majadedi says, "but coming home proved the hardest trial of all. After we had announced our wish to return, a representative of the same Islamic Party of Afghanistan, headed by Hikmatyar Gulbuddin, called on us in the Parachinar camp (which was actually a reservation). At first he tried to dissuade us, in an unctuous voice, promised us help and 'warned' us that national reconciliation was merely a trap. Failing that, he started openly threatening us. We slipped out of the camp that night with a nomad caravan. We knew that Pakistani cordons prevented many of our compatriots from coming home. We were lucky to bypass all the obstacles and get back. We have been given a friendly welcome, supplied with food and all our basic needs until we've found our feet and promised a plot of land. We want to share our people's joys and problems."

Thousands upon thousands of Afghans are still abroad against their will. The prospect of the situation in the neighbouring democratic country becoming stabilized is obviously not to the liking of reactionary circles in Pakistan and Iran. As for the Afghan revolutionary authorities, they are determined—a statement of the D.R.A. Foreign Ministry says—while making the necessary provisions to facilitate the return of those who have found themselves out of the country for various reasons, to establish good-neighbourly relations with Iran and Pakistan.

Despite all the obstacles and dangers, more and more refugees are returning to the D.R.A. this spring and are being given a warm welcome.

LEONID MIRONOV
our special correspondent

Islam Gala—Jalalabad—Moscow

Anwar Majadedi and his family.

Photo by author

dignation throughout the continent. Even extremely right-wing papers were compelled to criticize the U.S. for its stance in the affair. The Reagan administration's clumsy intervention caused panic even in its supporters, who had been trying for years to convince the Latin Americans that it was necessary to put the common concerns of the West above their national interests so that in the event of an attack by an "external enemy" the U.S. would defend its neighbours in the Western Hemisphere.

The landing of Argentine troops on the Malvinas came as no surprise to the White House. Moreover, American diplomatic moves on the eve of the landing had made Argentinian ruling quarters confident that in their effort to retrieve the Malvinas they would have Washington's moral if not physical support.

Thomas Enders, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, and General John McEnery, Chief of the Inter-American Defence Board, who visited Buenos Aires early in March 1982, were reported by the press to have shown an "understanding" of the Argentinian position in the dispute with Britain and expressed their conviction that the return of the Malvinas to Argentina was an indisputable prerequisite for the establishment of a Western defence system in the South Atlantic.

A few hours before the landing, however, a telephone call from Washington dispersed whatever illusions the Argentine President might have had about American support. But, to quote Galtieri, "it was already too late." To cancel the operation would have meant waiving all claims to the South Atlantic islands and tolerating the military presence of Britain (and, consequently, of its NATO partners, in particular the U.S.) in a region of vital importance to Argentina.

American diplomacy assumed the role of an "honest broker" with a view to consolidating U.S. presence in the conflict area and "prevailing upon" the Argentine military government, which had long been on the brink of collapse. However, the British-Argentine confrontation took a turn that Washington had not expected. On April 8, instructing Secretary of State Alexander Haig to mediate between the conflicting parties, Reagan felt obliged to say that all this has gone too far. Haig's mission amounted to direct political pressure on Argentina from the U.S. and its support for British military action.

VLADIMIR VESENSKY

A screwdriver for Islamabad

"Two turns of the screwdriver" was how, until recently, the distance between Pakistan and its own atomic bomb was described.

But now it turns out that the screwdriver has been turned, and probably twice, for that matter.

This admission was made by Pakistan's top nuclear scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan. In an interview with the prominent Indian journalist, Kuldip Nayar, which was printed early in March in the Indian press and in the British weekly The Observer, he said quite unambiguously that his country, in effect, already possessed a finished atomic bomb. It is not imperative to test it in natural conditions, he said, as a nuclear blast can be simulated in a laboratory.

Dr Khan is not a private citizen. He is director of the top-secret nuclear laboratory in Kahuta, near Rawalpindi. In addition to this he is chairman of the state atomic energy commission and is considered the "father" of the Pakistani nuclear bomb. His villa is guardad round the clock. Foreigners, especially Indians, are barred from it.

This means his meeting with the interviewer from Delhi was sanctioned from above. So logic suggests that the Pakistani government chose to use an interview with Dr Khan as a peculiar channel by which to send a specific signal to the world at large. Exactly what signal? We believe its political essence to consist of two parts—going by the number of recipients for whom the signal is primarily intended.

The first recipient

As calculated by Pakistani politicians, India was to be the first to receive the nuclear message from Islamabad. Indeed, the interview took place late in January, that is, in the peak period of tension on the Indo-Pakistani border. Pakistan had concentrated its shock forces and large quantities of military hardware near the border. The situation was reminiscent of that in late 1971, when Islamabad undertook its latest aggression against India.

In these conditions, according to plan, swinging the nuclear cudgel should have intimidated Rajiv Gandhi's government and made it cancel measures in response to the aggravation of the situation on the border. When describing the details of his interview in a Delhi club in mid-March, Kuldip Nayar said Dr Khan had openly qualified his statement about the bomb as a "warning" to India.

In addition to this military-tactical aim a more impressive political strategic objective was pursued. It appears that Pakistan, probably in collusion with the United States, intended to provoke India into a "symmetrical" response. Though seemingly illogical, this is a thoroughly calculated move serving the long-term political interests of Washington and Islamabad. For if India decided on the "nuclear option" as a means of reply, it would lose its position as a generally recognized leader of the non-aligned movement, its moral right to speak on behalf of the young states for nuclear disarmament, and raise doubts as to its role in the Delhi Six, which is pressing for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, this would give Pakistan a sound pretext for continued military aid from the United States.

Delhi was confronted with a difficult dilemma. Certain Indian members of parliament and public leaders and some press organs are demanding that the government counter the Pakistani bomb with its own. As is well known, India let off an experimental nuclear device in 1974. Since then the country's leaders have invariably kept to their decision not to use atomic energy for military purposes.

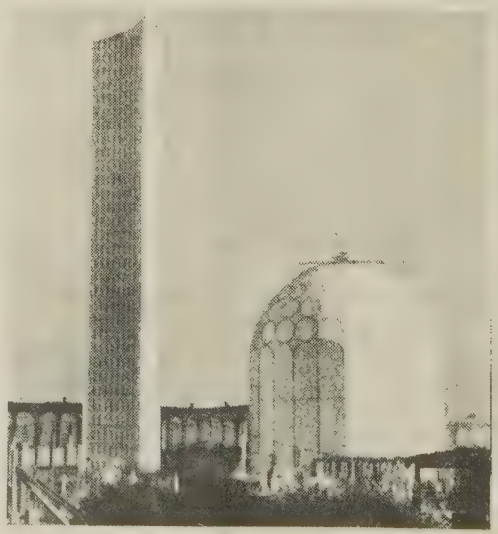
During the stormy debate in parliament in mid-March, the Minister of State for External Affairs Eduardo Faleiro firmly declared: "At this point we don't intend to make the bomb. We hope we would not be forced to deviate from this position."

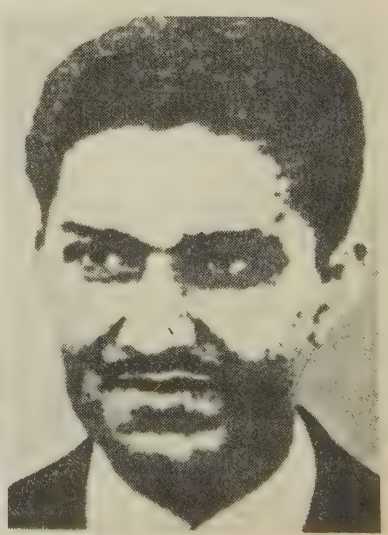
The second recipient

Islamabad's nuclear message had also a second target—Washington. At the time, the U.S. Congress had just started hearings on a new stage of American military and economic aid to Pakistan worth over $4 billion for a six-year period. In accordance with U.S. legislation, the so-called Symington amendment, such a dollar injection can only be made if Congress accepts the President's assurances that the recipient country, in this case Pakistan, is not implementing a nuclear military programme.

It would seem that the timing of the signal from Islamabad was wrong. But to draw this conclusion would be to

The nuclear complex in Kahuta. Abdul Khan, the "father" of Pakistan's A-bomb.
Photos from Time and Newsweek (U.S.A.)





underestimate the political acumen of the Pakistani leaders. In the opinion of the prominent Indian political analyst and military expert K. Subramanyam, director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Islamabad proceeds from the following premise: the Reagan administration will arrive at the conclusion that it is no longer possible to avert the manufacture of nuclear arms by Pakistan, and for this reason will not sacrifice the programme of aid to this strategically important country for the sake of the illusory aim of compelling it not to produce the atomic bomb. That must be the reason our correspondent was told at the Pakistani embassy in Delhi that the Zia ul-Haq government is confident that the U.S. administration will once again persuade Congress not to apply the Symington amendment to Pakistan.

In an interview to the American Time magazine (March 30) President Zia ul-Haq bluntly stated: "You can virtually write today that Pakistan can build a (nuclear) bomb whenever it wishes." He expressed confidence that the programme of American military and economic aid to Pakistan would be approved because the interests of Pakistan and the United States coincide at the present moment. "The United States of America —the Senators and the Congressmen— will look to the higher national interest rather than this tiddly-widdly Pakistan nuclear programme," Zia ul-Haq said.

It appears to be a case of the tail wiggling the dog. Indeed, this unusual situation is typical to a certain degree of the present stage of American-Pakistani relations. Washington does not want to irritate its junior partner in South Asia for several reasons. It needs a potential bridgehead for its rapid deployment force and wants Pakistan to play the role of a potential policeman in the Middle East. Using Pakistan as a "counterbalance" to India, Washington would like to reduce India's independent international role to regional issues. Last but not least, Washington values Pakistan as a bridgehead in the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

When all these American aims and considerations in respect of Pakistan begin to contradict the avowed desire of the United States for nuclear non-proliferation, President Reagan prefers to sacrifice non-proliferation, the New Times correspondent was told by a highly-placed Indian Foreign Ministry official. The more so that the last of the above-stated aims is acquiring priority importance for Washington.

The policy of national reconciliation initiated by Kabul has exposed the Zia ul-Haq regime to strong pressure by the Pakistani public, which is demanding an end to support for the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. Exploiting this circumstance, the Pakistani leadership is trying to put pressure on Washington by timing the signal about its nuclear status to coincide not only with the congressional hearings on aid to Islamabad but also with the new round of Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva. A well-calculated move because, as was noted by K. Subramanyam, what the U.S. administration now fears most is that Islamabad might consent to reach an agreement with Kabul on the settlement of the "Afghan problem."

Hypocrisy

Yet the tail is not wiggling the dog. Both sides are acting in concert. In response to Pakistan's consent to remain a "strategic ally" Washington is not only increasing deliveries of conventional armaments to Islamabad, but also encouraging its nuclear ambitions.

The Reagan administration's hypocrisy in the question of nuclear non-proliferation is especially obvious today. The President likes to repeat that this issue remains a cornerstone of U.S. policy. But something quite different is reported by Indian correspondents with reference to highly-placed officials of the U.S. administration. On the one hand, the United States is giving Pakistan massive military and economic aid, supposedly to prevent it from taking the "ultimate step"—the manufacture of its own nuclear bomb. On the other, Pakistan's strategic importance to the United States is said to be the explanation for the military deliveries it receives—Washington purportedly has no choice but to continue these deliveries, regardless of any progress by Islamabad in the development of atomic arms. At the same time, Indian journalists note, officials continue to insist that the U.S. deliveries of conventional armaments to Pakistan pursue the aim of keeping it from producing nuclear arms.... And this is repeated endlessly.

Incensed by this hypocrisy, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi stated in parliament in the middle of March that those who could prevent Pakistan from producing a nuclear bomb were not doing so.

They are doing other things. Not without U.S. assistance, Pakistan has drawn closer to its nuclear bomb within a distance of "two turns of the screwdriver," and is being allowed to use the screwdriver itself. So if now the Indian subcontinent has to live with a local nuclear threat, responsibility for this will rest with Washington.

LEONID ZHEGALOV
our own correspondent

Delhi

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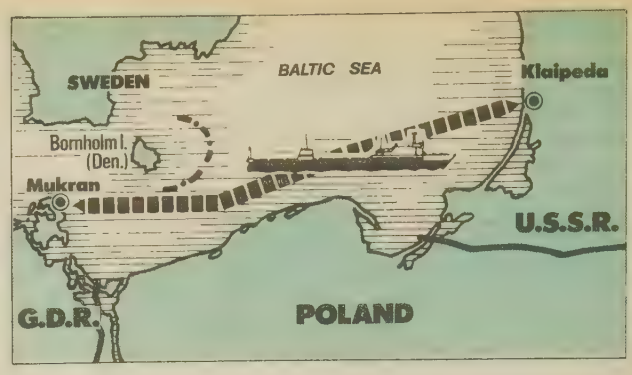
The Mukran-Klaipeda railway ferry — problems and prospects

The ferry



From our special correspondent
NIKITA ZHOLKVER

Reports on the opening of the "bridge across the Baltic" between the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic last autumn featured prominently in newspapers and magazines in the two countries. And they deserved to, because a project unlike any in the world had been commissioned. But for the full potential of the ferry to be realized, a number of complex problems must still be solved.

The causeway

The island of Rügen, on whose eastern shores the ferry terminal is being built, is linked with the mainland by a narrow causeway, along which run both a highway and a single railway track. There is no room for a second line. Moreover, in the middle of the causeway there is drawbridge. So 4-5 times a day, all traffic stops for about half an hour to let ships pass to and from Stralsund Bay. Cars pile up and trains are forced to wait.

We were lucky. Our Wartburg car was not caught in the jam and we got through quickly to the other side of the island. Just before entering the town of Sassnitz —the northernmost town in the republic —we turned to the right and stopped at the passport control checkpoint. Then we were on the site of the ferry terminal, which covers an area of 200 hectares.

It seemed unusually quiet in the head office. In fact, this was not surprising. The pace of work was such that each person on the staff was busy and had no time to ramble aimlessly down corridors or chat on the stairs.

We found the office of the director of the Mukran terminal, Rudi Sickert. His secretary asked us to wait as we were early for our appointment.

"I can give you an hour," said Rudi Sickert, as we shook hands. "So fire ahead with your questions."

First I spoke of the doubts that had arisen as we drove along the causeway. So far only one ferry was in operation. But there are to be six in all. That means a lot of railway cars. Would the causeway's traffic capacity be enough?

"A logical question," replied Rudi Sickert. "The causeway is indeed our weakest point. Six ferries mean 20 goods trains a day. In addition, there will be passenger trains. But our calculations show that the causeway would be able to take the load. And beyond the bridge there is a bypass. So everything should be all right if a strict schedule is kept to. There are also plans to build another causeway. Not because of the ferry traffic, but because the existing bridge was built more than 50 years ago and does not meet present requirements. But, I repeat, the ferry will be able to operate normally in existing conditions."

I would have liked to share Rudi Sickert's optimism. But keeping strictly to the railway schedule would not be an easy job. In the course of my trip to the German Democratic Republic I had travelled three times by train, and not once had it left or arrived punctually. The delays had amounted to 15, 20 and 40 minutes respectively. When I remarked on this, I was told that the Reichsbahn is facing some pretty formidable difficulties: there are staff shortages and many of the lines require repairs. But to return to Mukran.

Speed

"What prompted the construction of 'the bridge over the Baltic'? When did the idea originate? And why was a ferry chosen?"

"The idea of a ferry was first mooted in the 1950s. But then it was dropped. Understandably, as there was no urgent need for it. At the end of the 1970s the question cropped up again. The volume of trade between the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union was growing rapidly. Today it is three times greater than it was in the early seventies. And the traditional routes—rail and sea—were overloaded. It was decided that their development was not economically feasible and so the ferry route was chosen."

Sending cargoes by rail costs 6 times more than by sea. But if the extra 5.3 million tons a year that the ferry is expected to cope with are sent by freighters it will require an additional 14-16 wharfs at both ends of the route, not to mention 5-6 thousand dockers.

"There was another weighty argument in favour of the ferry," continued Rudi Sickert. "The saving in time. That plays a decisive role in the economy as a whole, and in its transport service particularly. Time is indeed money on the transport services. One of the advantages of the ferry will be that about 20 per cent less time will be spent transporting goods than by sea or rail. The ferry turnover is 48 hours: 20 hours in one direction (a distance of 273 nautical miles—that is, about 506 kilometres), four hours at each end for loading and unloading operations. Energy expenditure is also less. Moreover, train has to cross two frontiers—the ferry only one. Less time will be spent on customs formalities. And the distance is shorter. So the economic arguments all favour the ferry. Yet the Western press has claimed that the ferry was being built for military purposes. An unbiassed person can see clearly that its main purpose was to resolve the problem of transporting ordinary cargoes between the two countries. Of course, any transport route can be used to carry military cargoes, and a military purpose can be ascribed to any project—even an ordinary house can allegedly be used for military barracks. The ferry is no exception. But, I repeat, strategic considerations did not play a decisive role."

1,625 days

That is the exact number of days that elapsed between the moment when the first bucket of soil was scooped up and the completion of the first phase of the ferry project. On October 2, 1986, the first ferry flying the flag of the G.D.R., the Mukran, set out for Klaipeda.

Rudi Sickert explained that four main

reasons governed the choice of the small fishing settlement of Mukran as the site for the new port. Mukran is the easternmost village on the island, and, hence, the closest to Klaipeda. It has a convenient surface area and sufficient depth. That last is a major consideration, as deep waters on the Baltic coast are rare. Moreover, Mukran is a convenient link for senders and receivers of cargoes. For the main centres of our industry, Rudi Sickert added, are in the central and southern parts of the country. There are only two railway lines running north. One leads to the port of Rostock, the second to Sassnitz, and its capacity is not fully used.

But as often happens, the choice of Mukran also had its share of disadvantages. First, it meant starting virtually from scratch. Unlike most Baltic ports, Mukran has no natural barriers. They have had to be built. The northern pier, almost a kilometre and a half long, has been completed, while the southern one is still under construction. They will protect the harbour area and the ferry terminal from storms. The entire project is to be completed by December 1989. By last autumn 60 per cent of the investment in the project had been used.

The bridge

A couple of weeks before I travelled to Mukran I was in the port of Ilyichevsk on the Black Sea—the terminal of the ferry link with Varna, Bulgaria. I watched the loading of railway cars there. A shunting engine pushed two cars onto the middle deck of the ferry (the ferries are three-deckers and can accommodate 108 cars). ("Stop! Back up a bit! The logs are grazing the ceiling!") The two cars are placed on a lift which takes them either to the top deck or the bottom one. Then minilocomotives (there's one on every deck except the middle one) remove them from the lift, take them to the turntable and then deliver them to their loading place. The entire procedure takes about 10 hours if there are no hitches, that is. If the expensive Western-made lift breaks down, it means a holdup, or only the middle deck can then be used. Even I, anything but an expert in such affairs, found the whole procedure very complicated and hardly economical. In Mukran an entirely different solution has been found.

"Our task," Rudi Sickert said, "was to transport 5.3 million tons of cargo annually over a distance of 506 kilometres. That required so many hours. Calculating how many cargo vessels would be needed was simple. Using the Ilyichevsk procedures, we would have needed two more ferries. That was expensive. The only way out was to cut down on port time. And with that in mind we looked for an alternative. We decided on a double-decker bridge that would enable both decks of the ferry to be serviced simultaneously. This also eliminated the need to push the cars around on the ferry itself, as well as the need for a lift, turntables and minilocomotives. The entire loading-unloading process could be completed in four hours."

The double-decker bridge is the heart of the ferry terminal. It is a unique structure, and has been patented in many countries. Although it weighs all of 450 tons, it is easy to handle and docks smoothly with the boat.

"Which is cheaper: a lift on a ferry or a double-decker bridge?"

"Not an easy question to answer," replied Rudi Sickert. "But, as I said, if we hadn't chosen the bridge, we would have needed two more ferries. I would put it this way: the port terminals cost more than those in Ilyichevsk or Varna, but since we have cut down on port time, in Mukran we will recoup on our investment much sooner. Here, placing a car or removing it from the ferry takes on average just under a minute, while in Varna and Ilyichevsk upwards of three minutes—three times as much—are spent on the operation. Draw your own conclusion. But remember that transportation time is of prime importance."

The railway car

When Europe started building railways, the standard gauge of the track was 1,435 mm (the distance between the wheels of a British mail carriage). In Russia a wider gauge was chosen—1,520 mm. Ever since, the problem of reconciling the two has existed. Anyone who has made the journey by rail across the Soviet frontier stations Brest or Chop knows that the railway cars are lifted onto different wheel carriages. The operation takes over an hour. Nor can this be avoided in Mukran. So a special shop has been built for the operation.

The ferries themselves have the wider gauge. That proves to be more profitable, since it increases the load capacity by 30 per cent. If the European standard gauge had been used, another three ferries would have been needed.

Since the gauges of the railway tracks are different, changing wheel carriages is unavoidable. But that is only half the problem. It turned out that only 10 per cent of the railway cars carried by the ferry could have their wheel carriages changed. From the other 90 per cent, cargoes had to be unloaded into local cars (two for every incoming car). Although the difference in gauges is a mere 85 millimetres, most Soviet goods cars are much bigger. And they risk bumping into signal posts, platforms and other engineering structures.

"If the Soviet Union made wider use of cars that can be switched to our gauge," Rudi Sickert told me, "we could save a lot of precious time."

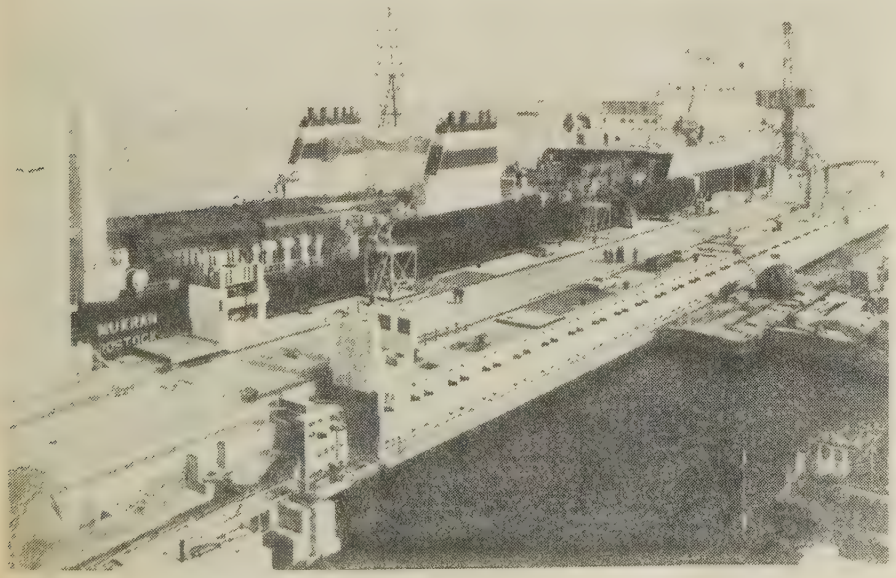
Another thing I noticed in Ilyichevsk was a large number of empty cars on the ferry. When I remarked on this, people in Ilyichevsk shrugged their shoulders. What can we do? The cars that carry timber to Bulgaria can't be used to carry back tinned goods.

"Do you have such problems?" I asked Rudi Sickert.

"Unfortunately, yes," he replied. "The structure of the trade turnover does affect us as well." He picked up a file and, taking a paper from it, suggested I look at it. "We receive iron ore, aluminium and paper. And we send off to Klaipeda farm machinery, furniture and prams. You can't load a combine har-

This ferry terminal in Mukran is manned by a staff of 12.

ADN photo



vester into a boxcar that carried ore. It needs a flat car. So we have our share of empty cars—about 15 per cent of the total."

A few words in this connection about the Black Sea ferry. It seems that it is not only the structure of the trade turnover that is responsible for the empty cars. As the Bulgarian paper Rabotnichesko Delo wrote at the end of January, "the ferry's Achilles' heel is the lack of proper coordination between the shipping agency and the railway administration." That affects the smoothness of ferry operations. Indeed, no trade turnover structure can explain the fact that on January 8 the ferry "Heroes of Odessa" left Varna with 50 empty cars on board. And that was no exception. The paper pinpointed the reason as the irregular deliveries of goods to be exported by factories and firms.

The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party discussed the prospects of the Varna-Ilyichevsk ferry. A number of Bulgarian ministries and departments were instructed to draw up, together with the Soviet side, steps to improve their cooperation.

Prospects

So far the "bridge across the Baltic" is used only by the two countries that built it. Cargoes are sent and received by enterprises and organizations in the G.D.R. and the U.S.S.R. But the potential of the ferry—especially taking into account that a second terminal is now under construction—are such that much wider use could be made of them.

Several transit routes now pass through the German Democratic Republic. The ferry line Sassnitz-Sweden, for one. The Scandinavian countries make extensive use of it, as it is the shortest route to Western and Southern Europe.

"Is the German Democratic Republic considering using the ferry as a means of earning foreign currency? Could it serve as a transit point for goods destined for Western Europe?"

"Yes," replied Rudi Sickert. "Eventually we shall offer our services to other European countries." He spoke of plans to build a similar ferry link between the U.S.S.R. and the F.R.G. A promising idea, as their trade links are well developed, and Federal Germany also does considerable business with Japan. West German firms are interested in a reliable transport route to the Far East. Across Siberia by rail, and then across the Baltic by ferry would be much quicker than way half round the world by sea. Rudi Sickert believes that the possibility of using the already existing Mukrain-Klaipeda ferry for this purpose has not been ruled out in Federal Germany. It would be simpler than building a new one.

"If such agreement is reached, then the cargoes carried for the F.R.G. will be over and above the 5.3 million tons a year planned at present?"

"In principle, yes. But we could also allocate then a share (say, 500 thousand tons) of the present 5.3 million."

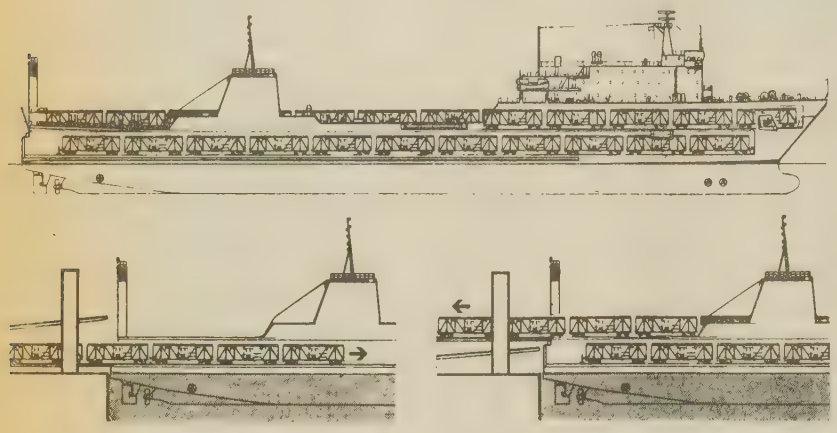
* * *

Rudi Sickert glanced at his watch.

"I hope I have at least partially satisfied your desire for information."

I took the hint, and rose to leave, thanking him for his highly informative interview.

Mukran—Berlin—Moscow



The ferry holds 103 railway cars: 54 on the upper and 49 on the lower deck. Its displacement is 12,000 tons, length: 190.5 m, width: 28 m. With its 46-man crew, it cruises at up to 17 knots. The ferry is loaded and unloaded by means of a two-tier bridge attached to the upper and lower decks by turns.

Diagram from Neues Deutschland (G.D.R.)

South Africa's President Pieter Botha has announced parliamentary elections, in which only whites are entitled to vote, for May 6. Botha hopes to be given a mandate to continue his policy of half-reforms, which only create a semblance of change. Meanwhile, the regime is toughening its repression against the opponents of apartheid and whipping up "white patriotism," galvanizing 4.5 million whites for a "virtually inevitable" war of survival.

Conformist majority

Survival has always been the main preoccupation of the Afrikaners, the descendants of settlers who came to South Africa from the Netherlands and France in the middle of the 17th century.

Martin Luther King once said: "We shall have to repent in this generation not so much for the evil deeds of wicked people but for the appalling silence of the good people."

That philosophy of survival has conditioned the conformist majority in the white community, who are following developments in silence, though not without anxiety. This "passive stratum" enjoys every fruit of apartheid, which has legitimized the oppression of the South African blacks, and has long been deaf to the voice of human conscience. They hope that the government will be able to find a way out of the present situation and keep the whites a privileged class. These people always vote for government policy and do nothing to give even the slightest reason to doubt their loyalty to the system. It is these people who fear international economic sanctions most of all, because their profits and way of life are bound to be affected. Even when the whole world is shaken by Pretoria's outrages against blacks, such people peacefully sit with whiskey and soda in their homes or enthusiastically support their teams in stadiums. They merely switch off their TV sets when "riots" are reported briefly in news programmes.

The emergence of that stratum is a result of the "selection" carried out by the ideologists of racism over the decades. The white educational system in South Africa is geared to fostering in future defenders of apartheid a sense of superiority over other races and peoples and hatred for "any manifestation of communism." The white man, especially the Afrikaner, should have superb political health to give unhesitating support to any action by the government.

The Afrikaner has always been led to believe, and does believe, that every-

Will the "white tribe" see the light?

BORIS ASOYAN

thing in South Africa is done "fairly," that there is peace and harmony in the country and that the blacks are happy with their lot because they are far better off than people in neighbouring African countries. "Come and see for yourself that everything bad they say about South Africa is nothing but propaganda," I heard from an Afrikaner in Zimbabwe.

Developments in South Africa have left the whites in a void, as it were: the old idols have been destroyed while the new ones augur chaos and desolation. A small part of the white community, primarily young people and intellectuals, have been able to shake off the tentacles of official propaganda and realized that there is only one way out of the deadlock caused by apartheid in South Africa, and that is the overthrow of the unjust regime. The immorality of the racist system continues to torment their consciene and—a spark of hope for the country—the conscience of the white majority that still clings to its well-being, built on that immorality.

What looked unshakable and eternal only twenty years ago has proved rotten. It appears that not only the system they have built but their very way of life is a thing of the past. The structures in which they believed have turned out to be composed of apalling medieval anomalies which emerged when Dutch and French farmers, secure in their Calvinist belief in the heavenly predestination of all races and peoples, devised those structures on coming to South Africa. Those first settlers were certain that if the foundation stones were cemented by blood, the edifice would stand for centuries. A good deal of blood was shed but the more of it they poured into the "foundation" the shakier the walls became.

Dostoyevsky wrote in his diary: "They say that only that thing stands firm under which blood has been spilt; perhaps so, but we should remember that it is firm for those whose blood has been spilt but not for those who spilled it—this is the main law of blood on Earth." Those who are spilling blood in the black ghettos of South Africa and in barbarous raids into Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique would like it to bind the whites together by scaring them with the prospect of retaliation.

Flight of cowards

The ideologists of apartheid have been inculcating a siege mentality in the white community over the years. They have succeeded, but that mentality has not proven as useful to the system as was expected. The nagging presentiment of inevitable clashes with the black majority, "backed by world communism," as the racist propaganda keeps repeating, could not have helped but warp the psychology of the "white tribe." Most South African whites have a pessimistic view of the future. Although they keep assuring themselves and others that the white man is invincible and that his supremacy is eternal, there are lingering doubts. Nor does silence save the racist "mire" from terrible all-pervading fears, which can no longer be suppressed by whiskey or deafening music.

The invisible enemy is everywhere: department stores can be bombed, your car can hit a mine on a country road, and all doors and windows have to be kept locked and bolted at all hours. A study released in July 1986 indicates that firearms are kept in every other white household and that the percentage is far higher among Afrikaners.

The worm of doubt and fear is gnawing at the hearts even of some upright Afrikaners, who cannot help but understand that the system of institutionalized racism has no place in today's world and that no effort to defend it is likely to succeed. The flames of candles lit in churches by the mothers of blacks killed by police blend into a huge torch of the wrath of a people that has grown tired of slavery.

The anachronism of apartheid is becoming more and more apparent to the whites, making them wonder about their future. Should they flee, following the example of those thousands who have sold everything and ventured into the unknown in Australia, Canada, Argentina and even Zimbabwe, paradoxical as it might seem? Or should they stick it out to the end? But then they should either prepare for war with the blacks or seek an accommodation with them. Both prospects are horrific.

Most of those who choose to flee are English-speaking. Afrikaners pull contemptuous faces when they read advertisements for legal services to those who are about to leave the country. The old acrimony between the Afrikaners and the British has recurred. Old jokes are told anew—"the Briton's evening prayer: 'Oh, God, thank you for your gift of this marvellous country, in which the blacks are working for me and the Afrikaners protecting me.'" New jokes also have a sting: "What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee? The time they choose to flee. What is a patriot? A man who cannot sell his house."

The diehards claim that they are not worried by the departure of several thousand Britons. "It is the flight of cowards," they say. "The Afrikaners remain. We knew 300 years ago that we would have to fight. The hour has come." However, they cannot deceive even themselves with such pathetic discourses, and there are fewer and fewer Afrikaners who are willing to die for apartheid. In a public opinion poll in December 1985, three per cent of Afrikaners (presumably about 100,000) said that in five years they would not be in the country.

The flight of whites is not only a moral blow to apartheid but also a grave economic loss: the first to go are professionals, among them physicians, engineers, teachers and managers. The figures are not yet high but continue to grow. On average more than 1,000 a month left in 1986, roughly a third more than in 1985. The incoming trickle of immigrants, conversely, is running dry, as South Africa loses its reputation of a land of fabulous profits on low investment.

But Pretoria is far more worried by the growing anti-government movement among the white population. That growth has been unprecedented in the past two years: about 5 per cent of the 8,000 arrested anti-apartheid activists and 5,000 anti-apartheid fighters who have gone underground since the emergency situation was proclaimed on June 12, 1986, are whites, including Afrikaners. Thousands of young men refuse to be enlisted in the army. Moreover, whites have begun to give sanctuary to blacks wanted by the police. White surgeons secretly attend to blacks wounded in shootouts with the security forces.

The white organizations legally opposed to apartheid, such as the Black Sash, the End Conscription Campaign,

the Coalition for the Right to Know and Women for Peace, total about 8,000 members. Although politically and socially disparate, they reflect the growing gap between the higher and lower echelons of the white community.

The authorities made it clear, however, that a white skin is no protection when it comes to saving the system. Roundups in white residential districts no longer surprise anyone.

Small wonder that feelings of division, protest, disillusionment and doubt are found in many works by South African authors today. Their characters are either losing or have already lost their bearings in life and are wandering aimlessly in that wilderness of great suffering which South Africa is today. The chief character of J.M. Coetzee's novel "Waiting for the Barbarians" eventually draws the painful conclusion that both the hangmen and those who call themselves liberals are on the same side of the barricades. He holds the unjust and flawed system responsible for the evil that has swept South Africa and pervaded even its air with blood. He writes: "One thought alone preoccupies the submerged mind of Empire: how not to end, how not to die, how to prolong its era. By day it pursues its enemies.... By night it feeds on images of disaster: the sack of cities, the rape of populations, pyramids of bones, acres of desolation...."

South African racism today is on a floodlit stage, as it were. The blinding glare of universal hatred melts propaganda makeup and cuts deep into "white patriotism." The ugly nakedness of the apartheid system is visible to everyone, and the wrath of the racist monster, stung by such exposure, is fraught with further suffering and bloodshed for whites and blacks alike.

Characters in books by Nadine Gordimer, Andre Brink, Athol Fugard and other writers think like those of Coetzee. They also predict that in the near future apartheid will be either abolished or wiped away regardless of the will of those who find justification for it either in the Bible or historical practice. What torments them is not only responsibility to future generations: they realize that the time is coming when, as in nazi Germany, the feeble "I didn't know" will not be an extenuating circumstance. ■

The last days of President Roosevelt

VICTOR MALKOV

The turn for the worse in U.S. and British relations with the Soviet Union in late March and early April 1945, in connection with what has been loosely described by some historians as the "Berne incident," still awaits conclusive appraisal. The designation is incorrect on several counts: for one thing, it occurred not in Berne but in other Swiss cities and, for another, it was far too serious to be qualified as a mere "incident."

The "Berne incident"

The reference is to the secret negotiations between U.S. and British representatives and the SS General Karl Wolff (Operation Sunrise-Crossword). These negotiations began not in March 1945 (as the Western allies falsely informed the Soviet government) but much earlier. The meeting with Wolff had a long prehistory of secret contacts between resident agents of American and British intelligence and representatives of the nazi intelligence service, as well as of the Wehrmacht high command and the SS.

According to the testimony of one American researcher in the history of U.S. intelligence, the purpose of these contacts was to "save Western civilization" by opening the front to the advancing Anglo-American forces and to conclude an armistice with the allies "excluding the Soviets." The contacts began in December 1944, as William Donovan, director of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), later reported to the U.S. army command in a special memorandum dated February 26, 1945. General George Marshall and Admiral William Leahy knew of these contacts.

Did Roosevelt know? It may be said with almost 100 per cent certainty that he did. Without the President's sanction General Donovan could not have disappeared from Washington on February 27 and turned up suddenly in the European theatre of hostilities. Donovan would not have ventured to act on his own, if only because of the pending reorganization of the intelligence service and the fact that his personal career was wholly dependent on Roosevelt.

Already in early March the operation made itself felt in intensified diplomatic and interdepartmental correspondence. And as time went on, it afforded increasing confirmation of the well-founded suspicions of the Soviet government that the reactionary forces in the West were again out to enter into a compact with the nazis and undermine the anti-fascist coalition.

Strangely enough, the diaries of Roosevelt's closest associates—Leahy, Hassett and Tully—make no mention whatsoever of the contacts with General Wolff. The question arises whether the President was informed of SS General Wolff's appearance in Switzerland and his secret talks with Dulles in proper time. It should be noted however that the terms of the surrender of the German forces in Italy had been discussed more than once by representatives of the Anglo-American command and nazi emissaries at an even earlier stage, and all the information received over communications channels of the Department of War, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Admiral Leahy's apparatus could not have bypassed the President.

The initial reaction of the Soviet government to the information it received from Washington and London on March 12 about the contacts in Berne (actually they took place in Lugano, Zurich and Ascona) was restrained: the U.S.S.R. took note of the information and merely advanced the perfectly logical condition that Soviet representatives take part in discussing the question of the surrender of the Wehrmacht in northern Italy. A condition even Churchill considered logical! As it was—or would

For the first part of this article see our previous issue.

have been had it been only a matter of surrender.

However, what at first glance appeared to be an inexplicable escalation of the conflict suddenly began. New and completely unconvincing explanations came to Moscow from Washington and London, and the Soviet proposal was rejected out of hand. Roosevelt was "pressured" by U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Averell Harriman and head of the U.S. military mission in Moscow John Deane. The latter even contended that at the final stage of the war military cooperation with the Soviet Union was no longer vitally necessary for the United States. Leahy and Marshall proposed issuing a statement to the effect that the negotiations under way affected purely military, not political problems and hence were not subject to agreement with Moscow.

Roosevelt may have considered this line of reasoning convincing at the moment, although concealed in the arguments of the "hard-liners" was a deception of which Roosevelt could not but have been aware. He had long been of the opinion that capitalizing on what the partner does not know is part of the politician's stock-in-trade. It is paradoxical that on the same day, March 24, on which he wrote to Earle describing the latter's intended anti-Soviet actions as a "betrayal," Roosevelt sent a message to Joseph Stalin in connection with the Soviet government's protest about the negotiations in Switzerland with the nazis, in which he virtually sought to cover up this anti-Soviet move, to minimize the significance of the contacts and whitewash them morally.

Escalation of the conflict

Within a few days the tension relaxed. But on the eve of Roosevelt's departure for Warm Springs there came another message from Stalin, and things suddenly took a new and even more unpleasant turn. The head of the Soviet government rejected Roosevelt's main argument that the Berne negotiations were merely routine, purely preliminary and unimportant "verification" of reports of a possible nazi surrender.

The question was put on a political plane, with the emphasis not on secondary but on fundamental issues: the level of trust between the allies, the inviolability of the commitments they had undertaken in the event of possible attempts by the nazis to torpedo the coalition, and, lastly, the measure of secrecy in matters affecting the security of each. This called for special study and carefully considered action. Time was running out.

Roosevelt spent the entire first half of the day on March 29 at the White House in intensive discussion with State Department officials, Democratic and Republican leaders in Congress, and the British ambassador. The main subject was the state of interallied relations and the formula for representation in the United Nations. The day's schedule was tightly packed, and ever present in the brief intervals between discussion was the disturbing thought of the continuing talks with the nazi emissaries.

Roosevelt left the White House in the evening. It was after he had gone to Warm Springs that he received the draft of a message in reply to Stalin's letter of March 29, which Admiral Leahy (together with General Marshall) had drawn up on March 31. It contained the same counterarguments as before. There were only two new elements: a rebuke to the Soviet Union for putting too much trust in "erroneous" information and a transparent hint that the source of this information might be Himmler's agents anxious to "sow suspicion and distrust between the allies." The authors of the draft even inserted the phrase "no negotiations for surrender have been entered into." This was an incautious step on their part. Moscow knew more about the separate talks in Switzerland than Washington suspected.

Moscow's reply was not long in coming. The reason for its sharp tone was plain to see: the negotiations which, it was claimed, had never been "entered into," were still going on. In his letter of April 3 Stalin did not mince words:

"You say that there have not been any negotiations. Presumably you have not been fully informed... Nor can I understand the silence of the British, who left it to you to correspond with me on this unpleasant matter, while they themselves keep silent, although it is known that the initiative in the whole story of the negotiations in Berne belongs to the British."

The row flared up afresh. Admiral Leahy and General Marshall—each separately—prepared two new draft messages, the General's being full of invective and accusation against the Soviet Union. Leahy, knowing the story of the George Earle letter, did his best to "tone down" Marshall's draft, the whole spirit and letter of which left no hope for a positive outcome. Roosevelt found the text submitted to him to be balanced: it reflected both his resentment at the "misrepresentations of my actions or those of my trusted subordinates," and assurances of his "personal reliability" and his determination to bring about, together with the Soviet Union, an unconditional surrender of the nazis.

One of the final paragraphs of the April 4 message was marked by a note of special concern that the conflict between the allies should not end in a break between them.

"Finally, I would say this: it would be one of the great tragedies

Roosevelt and Churchill.

of history if at the very moment of the victory, now within our grasp, such distrust, such lack of faith should prejudice the entire undertaking after the colossal losses of life, material and treasure involved."

His "flight" to Warm Springs thus found him totally preoccupied with unravelling the formidable knot formed as a result of the secret intrigues of the American and British special services. The anti-Soviet purport of the intrigue was clear: the Anglo-American forces, at minimum cost, taking advantage of the readiness of the leaders of the Third Reich, who had lost all hope of victory, to cease resistance on the Western front, would advance deep into the east and take control over the whole of Central Europe.

The report from Moscow in late March that Vyacheslav Molotov would not attend the opening of the conference in San Francisco could not have been a surprise for Roosevelt: the Soviet leadership had never concealed its disapproval of any action in violation of allied commitments. In a word, the entire experience of Soviet-American cooperation prompted Roosevelt to patiently seek mutually acceptable ways out of the crisis situation that had arisen.

A turn!

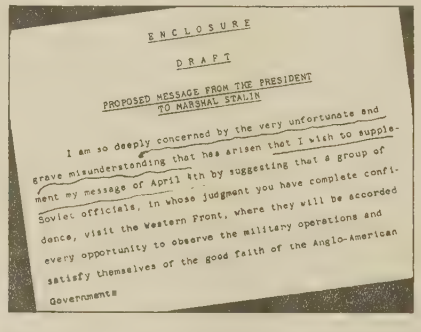
On April 5, 1945, the Soviet government denounced the Soviet-Japanese pact of neutrality of April 13, 1941. No one in America needed to be told what this meant. In a conversation with his private secretary William Hassett and Dr Howard Bruenn, the President admitted that "it was a bold step for Stalin." At his briefest—the 998th—press conference for a handful of newsmen accredited to the Little White House, Roosevelt reiterated his high appraisal of the Yalta agreements.

On April 6 the President received a telegram from the U.S. ambassador in London John G. Winant. Drawing on his positive experience of work with Soviet representatives in the European Advisory Commission, Winant wrote of the readiness of Soviet diplomacy for compromise. A message from Stalin the following day indicated that Moscow saw no point in fanning the conflict, inasmuch as all the basic principles of joint conduct of the war against the common enemy had been confirmed and recorded.

Let us mention another document with which Roosevelt in all likelihood was acquainted. On April 5 Admiral Leahy received a secret report from a group of competent military analysts dealing with "arrangements with the Soviets." The following was its main postulate:

"The maintenance of the unity of the Allies in the prosecution of the war must remain the cardinal and overriding objective of our politico-military policy with Russia."

The entire report, including recommendations and the enclosed draft of the President's message to Stalin, was essentially aimed at removing the critical consequences of the "Berne incident" in the relations between the allies. The negotiations in Switzerland, the report said, had caused a "misunderstanding of such gravity that no efforts should be spared to ensure its early removal." Contrary to the way the facts had been presented in the President's recent messages to Stalin, the



ENCLOSURE

DRAFT

PROPOSED MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO MARSHAL STALIN

I am so deeply concerned by the very unfortunate and grave misunderstanding that has arisen that I wish to supplement my message of April 4th by suggesting that a group of Soviet officials, in whose judgment you have complete confidence, visit the Western front, where they will be accorded every opportunity to observe the military operations and satisfy themselves of the good faith of the Anglo-American Governments

Roosevelt's unsent message to Stalin.

report spoke with concern of the danger that had been presented to the combat cooperation between the Western allies and the U.S.S.R. in the war.

Two new recommendations were made by the experts. The first contained the proposal that in order to restore confidence the President should send a special message to Moscow as a supplement to his letter of April 4 inviting Soviet military representatives to the Western front. The second suggested that General Deane be instructed to refrain from any "tough style" hasty steps with regard to the Soviet Union. The draft of the President's message to Stalin, enclosed in the report, consisted of only a few lines. It read:

"I am so deeply concerned by the very unfortunate and grave misunderstanding that has arisen that I wish to supplement my message of April 4th by suggesting that a group of Soviet officials, in whose judgement you have complete confidence, visit the Western front where they will be accorded every opportunity to observe the military operations and satisfy themselves of the good faith of the Anglo-American governments."

This hitherto unpublished document is extremely interesting. Although the supplement was never sent, it reveals its authors' trend of thought. The decision on how to answer Stalin was still under consideration. One thing, however, was clear: it had to be the final message that would put paid to the conflict. There was a suggestion that it begin with thanks for the "frank explanation" of the Soviet position, and go on with a reminder, as Marshall and General Deane wished, of the American "package of complaints" to the Soviet Union. However, the draft message ended on a perfectly definite note:

"We are now faced with the all-important task of joining our effort to yours in the final kill. Let us do this intelligently as good allies with good understanding. I know that you agree with me that therein lies the hope of a better world."

But the idea of a "long" message was subsequently dropped, and it has remained in the form of notes. On April 7 Roosevelt dictated a brief message to Churchill—this time drawn up by himself:

"I would minimize the general Soviet problem as much as possible because these problems, in one form or another, seem to arise every day and most of them straighten out, as in the case of the Berne meeting. We must be firm, however, and our course thus far is correct."

After he had finished dictating, Roosevelt leafed through the calendar on his desk. "Don't send this message today," he told his stenographer. "Send it next week—Thursday the 12th."

The President's testament

Evidently at this time the President wanted to analyze the events once more in order to take the only correct step that would enable all the leading powers of the anti-Hitler coalition to meet in San Francisco "on a friendly footing."

He laid everything else aside and proceeded to work on the text of the traditional speech he was due to deliver on Jefferson Day, April 13, and which he had been turning over in his mind for some time. His brief stay in Warm Springs had given him added vigour.

He spent the afternoon of April 11 dictating the final version of the speech which began with the reminder, customary on such occasions, of the place and role played in U.S. history by Thomas

Jefferson as Secretary of State, President and scholar. Roosevelt's speech also contained a reminder of the responsibility of the United States for the state of affairs in the world and of the might of its armed forces.

"Nor do we intend," he continued, "to abandon our determination that, within the lives of our children and our children's children, there will not be a third world war. We seek peace—enduring peace... The once powerful, malignant nazi state is crumbling. The Japanese warlords are receiving, in their own homeland, the retribution for which they asked when they attacked Pearl Harbour.

Roosevelt's funeral.

But the mere conquest of our enemies is not enough. We must go on to do all in our power to conquer the doubts and the fears, the ignorance and the greed which made this horror possible."

The next paragraph echoed the talks with Frankfurter and Bohr.

"Today we are faced with the preeminent fact that if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all people of all kinds to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace."

The final part of the speech was to read thus:

"Let me assure you that my hand is the steadier for the work that is to be done, that I move firmly into the task, knowing that you—millions and millions of you—are joined with me in the resolve to make this work endure.

"The work, my friends, is peace, more than an end of this war—an end to the beginnings of all wars, yes, an end forever to this impractical, unrealistic settlement of the differences between governments by the mass killing of peoples. Today as we move against the terrible scourge of war—as we go forward, toward the greatest contribution that any generation can make, the contribution of lasting peace, I ask you to keep up your faith. I measure the sound, solid achievement that can be made at this time by the straightedge of your own confidence and your resolve."

It will be no exaggeration to say that this was Roosevelt's political testament. After he had read through the text, he knew how he would answer Stalin. All variants containing as much as a hint of mutual recriminations were cast aside. At around noon on April 11 he handed Hassett the new text of a telegram to Stalin written by himself. It was brief:

"Thank you for your frank explanation of the Soviet point of view of the Berne incident which now appears to have faded into the past without having accomplished any useful purpose.

"There must not, in any event, be mutual distrust, and minor misunderstandings of this character should not arise in the future. I feel sure that when our armies make contact in Germany and join in a fully coordinated offensive the nazi armies will disintegrate."

On April 12 the telegram was sent from the White House to Harriman in Moscow and to Churchill in London. Shortly afterwards, a coded message came from Harriman with the suggestion that the word "minor" be deleted. The President answered at once and in a peremptory tone: "I do not wish to delete the word 'minor' as it is my desire to consider the Berne misunderstanding a minor incident."

These were Roosevelt's last messages and instructions. Shortly after 1 p.m. on April 12 he complained of "a terrific headache," and then lost consciousness. At 3.55 p.m. the President died of a severe brain haemorrhage.

* * *

Roosevelt's death on the eve of historic events of decisive significance was felt as a grievous loss to all who yearned for world peace. It was a blow to the difficult task of working out a new philosophy of security at a time when new but not yet fully comprehended global factors—socio-economic, political, national, military, scientific and technical—were already operating.

Franklin Roosevelt was moving (to a large extent gropingly and torn by inner doubts) towards something of an integral concept of a postwar settlement which, with all its weaknesses, could have become a basis for constructive action. Roosevelt believed it was necessary to create—taking into account the lessons of the past—an international security organization, to preserve the cooperation of the leading powers of the anti-Hitler coalition and the principle of the coexistence of countries with different social systems. He saw the development of Soviet-American relations as the key to the maintenance of stable international relations in the future.

Roosevelt's role in the affirmation of the positive traditions in Soviet-American relations was aptly defined by Harry Hopkins when, at a meeting with Soviet leaders in Moscow in May 1945, he said that Roosevelt did not lose sight of the fact that the economic and geographic interests of the Soviet Union and the United States did not conflict. Both countries appeared to be firmly launched—and Hopkins was sure Roosevelt was convinced of this—on the road leading to the solution of many difficult and complex problems affecting the two countries and the rest of the world.

It is well to recall these words today as we observe the anniversary of Roosevelt's death.

■

A play about Chernobyl at a Vienna theatre

"A warning" was how Austrian mass media described the play "The Sarcophagus" by Vladimir Gubarev after its premiere in the Volkstheater, one of Vienna's leading theatres, on April 5. The play was a highlight in Austrian cultural life. "The Sarcophagus" attracted public attention with its bold treatment of today's pressing problems. It was no accident that at the pre-first-night press conference, which drew a full house at the Austrian press club Concordia, newsmen asked the author and the theatre's managers not only about the play as such, but also about the political, moral and social problems it examines.

"Producing this play was hard but exciting work. It left none of the actors cold because they realized the importance and political significance of 'The Sarcophagus,'" Paul Blaha, the director of the Volkstheater, pointed out. Indeed, the play was staged in record time—just four weeks.

"This season's repertoire had been all settled, and our decision to squeeze the play in did not make the company particularly happy to begin with," Paul Blaha said. "It meant extra rehearsals, tighter work schedules, and sacrificing many tempting offers from radio, TV and film studios. No sooner had they read the play and got down to work on it, however, than they had second thoughts about the whole thing."

Heated discussions on the subject of nuclear power industry have been going on in Austria for years. A referendum was held some years ago, with the result that Austria's only atomic power plant in Zwentendorf was never put into operation. The International Atomic Energy Agency has its headquarters in Vienna. It was the IAEA that discussed, after the Chernobyl disaster, ways of building up a system of international cooperation which would guarantee the safe development of the atomic power industry. It was the IAEA that drew up and adopted, on the Soviet Union's initiative, international conventions governing international cooperation in preventing nuclear accidents and coping with the consequences of them. Against this background, the interest shown in the first-night performance of "The Sarcophagus" on the Viennese stage was predictable.

"This is the third production of the play I've seen," Vladimir Gubarev said after the premiere. "The first was presented by the Tambov Drama Theatre, and the second by the Belgorod drama company. These three productions have nothing in common except for the plot, of course, and the audiences' response to them. This goes to show that the message of my play is that the problems facing the modern world are universal, that all parts of it are closely interconnected and interdependent in this nuclear and space age of ours, and that keeping it intact is the responsibility of everyone.

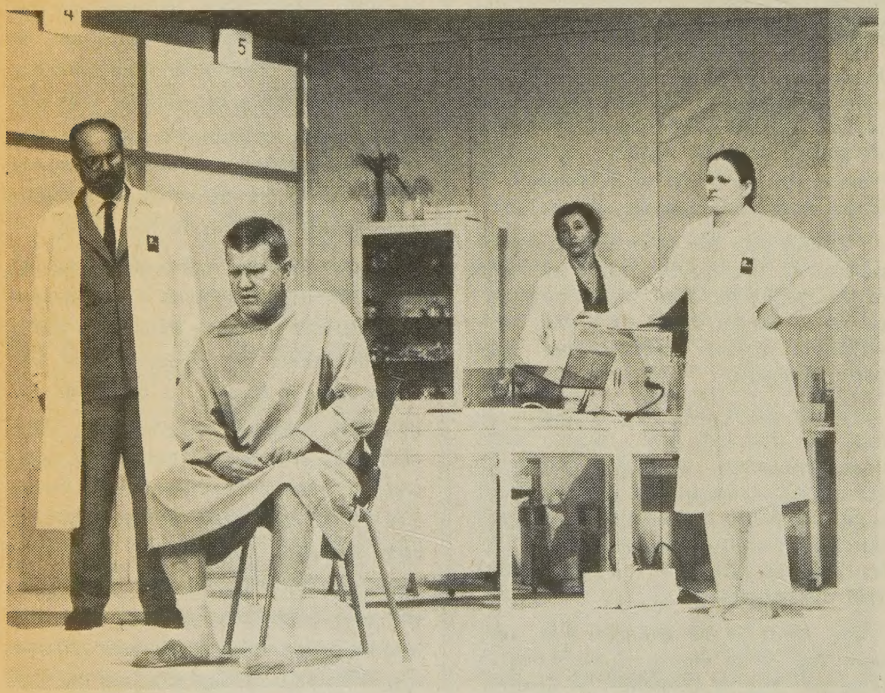
"However high the technical standard of modern equipment, it is controlled by man, and any error, be it caused by ignorance or irresponsibility, may result in a worldwide catastrophe. The Chernobyl tragedy and the Challenger accident have become alarm signals to people all over the planet. This is why the play's appeal to the sense of individual responsibility evoked such a ready response in Belgorod, Tambov and Vienna."

All those with whom we discussed the play in the Austrian capital pointed out that it is graphic evidence of the reforms now in progress in the Soviet Union, an example of truthfulness, openness and sincerity. True, not everyone there is pleased with the fact that the Soviet Union is now being given much more extensive press, radio and TV coverage in Austria than 3 or 4 years ago. A Western journalist who attended the preview tried to discern "the hand of Moscow" behind the play's success in Austria. He asked his colleagues whether the preview for foreign newsmen had been paid for by the Soviets, and was clearly disappointed to learn that it had been arranged by the Foreign Press Union.

ANATOLY KOVRIGIN
and DMITRY FADDEYEV

Vienna, April

A scene from "The Sarcophagus."



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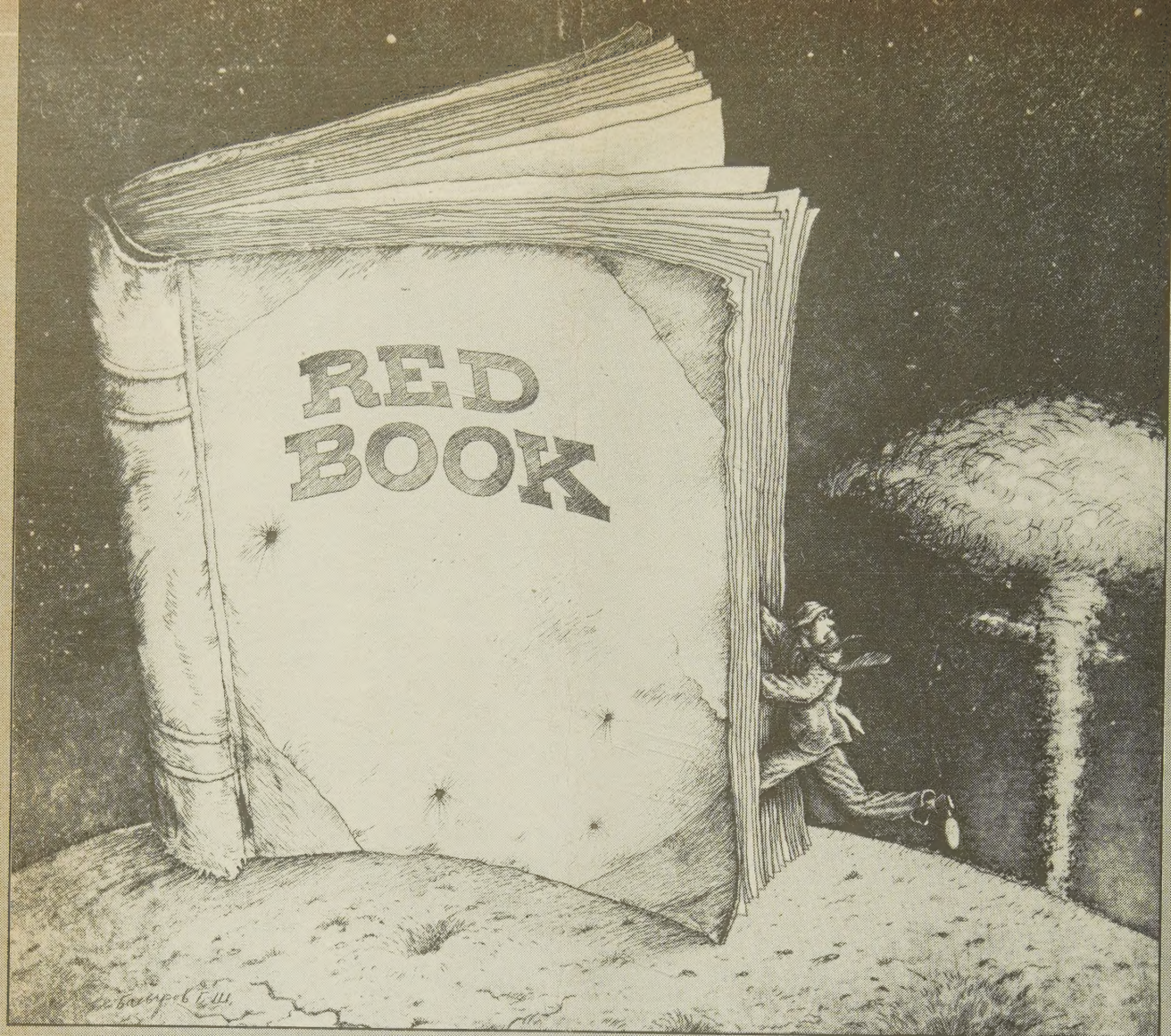

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